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BITTER SWEETS

LONDON : HUTCHINSON & CO., PATERNOSTER ROW

BY ORDER OF THE CZAR

A DRAMA IN FIVE ACTS

BY

JOSEPH HATTON
2

LONDON

HUTCHINSON AND CO.

PATERNOSTER ROW

1904

822.8
H 37 L

SPECIAL NOTICE

Arrangements for the production of this play can only be made with Miss Elizabeth Marbury, 20, Queen Street, Leicester Square, London, W.C.; Empire Theatre Building, New York; and 8, Rue Hippolyte Lebas, Paris.

PREFACE

IN regard to the prohibition of "By Order of the Czar" from circulation in Russia, and the seizure of a Swedish edition by the Russian police in Finland, I desire to point out that, though the official formula of "By Order of the Czar" covers the tyrannous acts of certain of his Imperial Majesty's Governors of provinces and prisons, the decree of mercy which ends the story is the personal act of the Emperor himself.

Though written for the stage, my present object in publishing this dramatisation of the story is, as far as possible, to secure my property from the piracy and mutilation of irresponsible playwrights. In the United States publication of a novel confers all

stage privileges. My English publisher, encourages me in the belief that there may be readers for the story in its present form, as at some future day there may be audiences for the play. For this optimistic suggestion I thank him, and, at the same time, venture to hope that the favour shown to the novel may be extended to the present publication.

JOSEPH HATTON.

GARRICK CLUB,
Christmas, 1903.

CHARACTERS

ANNA KLOSSTOCK . . .	Afterwards the Countess Stravensky.
OLGA	Servant to the Countess.
ANDREA FERARI . . .	Known as Ferari the Jew: in Act II. disguised as Goldstein the Banker, in Act III. known as Col. De Barsac, in Act V. a Russian General.
NATHAN KLOSSTOCK . .	Anna's father.
WIDOW MORITZ . . .	Klosstock's housekeeper.
NEGRUTZ	Servant to Klosstock, but in reality a Russian spy.
THE RABBI LOSINSKI .	Young learned Jew, betrothed to Anna.
MOSES GRUNSTEIN . .	A neighbour of Nathan's.
THE COUNT STRAVENSKY .	A Russian nobleman of Liberal sentiments holding official rank at Court.
GENERAL PETRONOVITCH .	The newly appointed Governor of the province, who hates the Jews.
PAULOFF	Servant to Petronovitch.
JETHRO	An imbecile boy.
DICK CHETWYND . . .	An English war correspondent.
PHILIP FORSYTH, R.A. .	An English artist of distinction.
HENSHAW	Servant to Forsyth.
SAM SWYNFORD . . .	A young English stockbroker.
MRS. MILBANKE . . .	A fashionable young English widow.
DOLLY	Her sister.
BEPP0	} Members of the Brotherhood.
PETROSKI	
IVAN	
CAPT. KAZAROFF . . .	A Russian officer.

OFFICERS, SERVANTS, VILLAGERS, SOLDIERS, JEWS,
RUSSIANS, ETC.

SCENERY

ACT I.—*Interior of Nathan Kosstock's House at Czarovna.*

ACT II., SCENE I.—*Office in the Governor's Palace.*

SCENE II.—*The Market-place of Czarovna.*

ACT III.—*Philip Forsyth's Studio on the Grand Canal, Venice.*

ACT IV.—*A Room in the Fazzio Palace, Venice, the temporary residence of the Countess Stravensky.*

ACT V., SCENE I.—*The Siberian Frontier.*

SCENE II.—*Siberian Boundary Post.*

PERIOD.—*From 1881 to 1887.*

Act I

SCENE.—*Interior of Nathan Klosstock's house in the Ghetto at Czarovna ; the general room, picturesquely and well furnished ; not too ostentatious, but sufficiently suggestive of comfort and moderate wealth. Large stove, chairs, cupboards or cabinets, seats, table with samavor. At the back, large old-fashioned windows, with quaint backing of Russian street. Entrances L. and R.*

TIME.—*Evening. As the act goes on, sun sets and lamps are lighted—one swinging ordinary candelabra, centre, one or two lamps in sconces on each side of room.*

[NATHAN KLOSSTOCK is discovered shaking hands and saying "Good-night" to neighbours, who are seen crossing window at back and making farewell gestures. At table, sewing and looking on, more or less interested, his housekeeper, WIDOW MORITZ. On table tea-things and samavor (Russian urn) ready for making tea.

KLOSSTOCK.

Good night, dear friends, and God bless you !

NEIGHBOURS.

Good night, good Master Klosstock, and God bless you !

KLOSSTOCK.

It has been a very happy day. When the wedding takes place, it shall be a festival indeed !

[Cheerful shouts of neighbours as they all file off and are heard talking and laughing merrily.]

[Turning to WIDOW MORITZ.] Ah, Mrs. Moritz, if my dear wife could have lived to see this day !

WIDOW MORITZ.

Would to God she might have done ! How well I remember her at the festival of Anna's baptism !

KLOSSTOCK.

We have both had our sorrows, Mrs. Moritz ; but we have much to be thankful for.

WIDOW MORITZ.

Yes, indeed, when we think of the sufferings and persecutions which fall upon the Lord's chosen people in other distant towns and villages of the Czar's empire.

KLOSSTOCK.

You say truly. We can never be too grateful for the blessings we have enjoyed under our most just and generous Governor. [*Going to window.*] Why, surely, here is his excellent Grace the Count Stravensky dismounting from his horse at our humble door.

Enter AMOS NEGRUTZ.

NEGRUTZ.

His Excellency the Count Stravensky desires to see you, Master Klosstock.

KLOSSTOCK.

[*Going to door.*] Beg him to enter, Negruz, beg him to enter.

[*KLOSSTOCK fussily going to door and bowing.*

Enter the COUNT STRAVENSKY.

STRAVENSKY.

Master Klosstock, I have a serious complaint to make against you.

KLOSSTOCK.

Most gracious Excellency, I crave your pardon.

STRAVENSKY.

[*Good-humouredly.*] I met your neighbours in

festive attire. They have been witnessing the ceremony of your sweet daughter Anna's betrothal to the Rabbi Losinski. And you did not invite me to the ceremony.

KLOSSTOCK.

Most noble sir, I would not have so far presumed.

STRAVENSKY.

Presumed? You, the chief trader in the province; I, the chief landowner, who have done business together and been friends all these years—and I have seen Anna grow up from childhood! Nay, [*putting his hand familiarly upon KLOSSTOCK's shoulder*] you owe me an apology.

KLOSSTOCK.

My dear Count—your most gracious Excellency—you honour me. I pay the debt with sincere gratefulness; and my daughter and her betrothed will thank you with all their hearts. [*Turning to WIDOW MORITZ.*] Pray call our dear Anna, and say his Excellency the Count Stravensky honours us with a friendly call.

[*Exit WIDOW MORITZ, R.*]

[*Placing chair for the COUNT.*] Your visit,

Excellency, crowns to me and mine the happiness of this day.

STRAVENSKY.

[*Seating himself.*] This young rabbi—had he known Anna before he came to Czarovna ?

KLOSSTOCK.

Oh, yes. He met her on the occasion of his first visit to our people.

STRAVENSKY.

From Moscow, I think ?

KLOSSTOCK.

Yes.

STRAVENSKY.

Exceptionally placed there, I believe, for a Jew.

KLOSSTOCK.

Yes, your Excellency.

STRAVENSKY.

Honoured, I believe, with a mission last year to Paris ?

KLOSSTOCK.

The same, your Excellency.

STRAVENSKY.

A happy man to win so fair a prize as Nathan Klosstock's daughter; well endowed with beauty, virtue, and riches.

KLOSSTOCK.

Your Excellency is most kind to say so.

STRAVENSKY.

You have heard no news of moment from the Governor?

KLOSSTOCK.

None.

STRAVENSKY.

I fear we must look for a change of Imperial policy in this happy province of Vilnavitch. [*Turns and sees ANNA. Entering R., she has paused in the doorway.*]

But here is your daughter.

[*ANNA advances, making low curtsy. COUNT STRAVENSKY goes towards her, takes her hand, and raises her up.*]

My dear child, permit me to offer you my congratulations and good wishes on this auspicious day.

ANNA.

I humbly thank your Excellency.

[Half turning her head, she leads forward
 LOSINSKI. WIDOW MORITZ *passes at back*
to her position near table, where she stands.

STRAVENSKY.

[To LOSINSKI.] Sir, you have won a treasure. Your people call her Queen of the Ghetto. She would do credit to a still higher title. *[To ANNA and LOSINSKI.]* I wish you both happiness and good fortune.

LOSINSKI.

We thank you, Excellency, with grateful hearts.

STRAVENSKY.

[To KLOSSTOCK.] There, sir, my mission is ended. But I must request the honour of an invitation to your next festival.

[KLOSSTOCK bows. COUNT STRAVENSKY, turning again to LOSINSKI and ANNA, continues :

And let me say with my good-night that if ever you

should need a friend, don't forget that your father and I have been good neighbours for twenty years.

[Shakes hands with KLOSSTOCK, bows to LOSINSKI and ANNA. The servant NEGRUTZ, who has been standing at the door watchful all the time, opens door. Exit COUNT STRAVENSKY, courteously and humbly followed by KLOSSTOCK. ANNA and LOSINSKI go to table where WIDOW MORITZ makes tea.]

ANNA.

[To LOSINSKI.] And they say we Jewish people are a persecuted race. Surely no orthodox Russians could be more honoured in such a visit as this.

LOSINSKI.

It would hardly be believed, my love, fifty miles from Czarovna. Please God we may take it as a revelation.

WIDOW MORITZ.

The Stravensky's is the bluest blood in Russia. It is a pity his Excellency does not marry. Come, sit down; Anna knows what a good cup of tea her old friend can make.

[As they sit, re-enter KLOSSTOCK with MOSES GRUNSTEIN.]

GRUNSTEIN.

[*Speaking as they enter.*] My dear old friend, the Count does himself honour when he pays respect to Nathan Klosstock, whose hand is ever open to distress—whether of Russian moujik or Russian Jew. Seeing him mount his horse, I felt bound to come in and say so.

ANNA.

[*To GRUNSTEIN.*] And just in time, neighbour Grunstein, for tea.

KLOSSTOCK.

Nay, we must conclude this day with something better than tea. [*Takes keys from pocket; goes to cabinet. Brings out large flask of wine.*]

[*Meanwhile ANNA and LOSINSKI take tea and talk in dumb show.*]

[*Placing wine on table.*] Ah, my dear Grunstein, a few more such as he and our noble Governor might make an earthly paradise for the Jew right through the province. [*Opens flask, pours out wine.*]

GRUNSTEIN.

[*Aside to KLOSSTOCK.*] Did the Count tell you of the strange news a traveller from Vilnavitch brings?

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KLOSSTOCK.

No, he was about to say something when he was interrupted.

[GRUNSTEIN *takes him aside. ANNA and LOSINSKI leave table and go to seat L. WIDOW MORITZ takes up sewing. GRUNSTEIN sits.*

[*Still standing.*] Strange news indeed, friend Grunstein. 'Tis surely some gossip's tale.

GRUNSTEIN.

Let us hope it is so, and drink to that good hope, dear old friend.

[*They drink and sit down, talking in dumb show. KLOSSTOCK turns aside to cabinet, brings out pipes and tobacco; they fill and smoke, while conversation goes on between ANNA and LOSINSKI on seat.*

LOSINSKI.

It is accounted a sin among the Christians to love even maid or wife beyond the man they have made their God; and I am glad to have been born a Jew, Anna, if it were only to be untrammelled by law, human or Divine, in my love for you.

NO NO

ANNA.

Do you not think that God's laws are as easy as man's are difficult?

LOSINSKI.

Yes, Anna, truly I do. Religion lies not in laws nor in knowledge, but in a pure and holy life.

ANNA.

And yet, dear love, I sometimes think you chafe here in Czarovna, and long for a wider sphere of usefulness.

LOSINSKI.

It is not so, Anna. My ambition is satisfied to be with you, whatever my sphere of work; but sometimes I wonder if it were not wise to leave this land of doubt and fear, and travel farther afield, where our people are safe from public persecution and private contumely.

ANNA.

Ah, you envy Andrea Ferari! You would like to go up and down the world as he does, seeing fresh peoples, noting the wonders of strange lands.

LOSINSKI.

My only desire is to be sure that your future shall be as happy as your past; that neither you nor your

father may ever be the victims of some sudden change of policy on the part of the Government. For myself, my life is nothing to me if it brings no special good to you. Martyrdom in such a cause would be happiness.

ANNA.

Nay, do not speak of martyrdom; you make my heart stand still! What martyrdom, dear love, could there possibly be for you in my behalf?

LOSINSKI.

Nothing that would be martyrdom. But how do we come to be talking in such a melancholy strain? Forgive me, Anna. Ferari comes to your father's house presently. I met him an hour ago at the barber's. He is particular about his toilette when he comes to see the Queen of the Ghetto.

[FERARI enters unobserved. Hearing his name, he smiles and pauses.

ANNA.

He is very welcome. Is he not something like the dove returning to the ark with news of the outer world? There are no books of travel so interesting as the travellers themselves.

FERARI.

[*Advancing.*] For which gracious sentiment I return you my hearty thanks.

ANNA.

Ah, Signor Ferari [*rising*]. • Welcome ! It is true we were talking of you.

LOSINSKI.

[*Rising and taking his hand.*] Again good-day to you. Anna finding me in a doleful mood began to talk of you ; I hope you will make us merry.

KLOSSTOCK.

That must be our duty to Andrea Ferari. [*Goes up to FERARI, takes him by the hand.*] Welcome, thou runagate Ferari ; here, there, and everywhere ; I don't know when most welcome, expected or unexpected ! You have seen our dear Losinski before to-day, and yet did not come to assist at our ceremonial ?

FERARI.

My heart was with you ; but I had business of grave importance elsewhere.

KLOSSTOCK.

[*Returning to his seat, and taking another pipe from*

cabinet.] Come, Ferari, here's your pipe. Pass the bottle, Grunstein—[*to FERARI*] and tell us all your news.

[*ANNA goes up to table with LOSINSKI, seating herself near FERARI.*]

ANNA.

Yes, Signor Italiano, now for your travels. Where have you been? To Venice again since last we saw you? .

FERARI.

Yes, little sweetheart, to Venice.

ANNA.

Our dear Losinski has never been to Venice. Tell him, Ferari, how from utter darkness our brethren have progressed in wealth, in power, and freedom, in your City of the Sea. Surely that is an encouragement for hope even here in Russia.

KLOSSTOCK.

Would to God that all our neighbours far and near [*lighting his big German pipe*] were as well considered and as justly protected in their rights as we of Czarovna!

FERARI.

Rights! [*in suppressed tone but fiercely*]. What rights, my father?

KLOSSTOCK.

The right to live without being beaten—the right to pray to the God of our fathers—the right to buy and sell.

LOSINSKI.

Yes, we are well off at Czarovna; but that should not make us content when our brethren in the East and West are ground under the heel, beaten in the streets, cast into prison, crucified! Even here in the South, Czarovna is one of the few exceptions, where we may do more than herd together like animals content to feed on the husks their masters fling to them. It was so once in Venice, where to-day our brethren hold up their heads in the blessed sun, and walk with the Christian merchants, their equals in respect and in power.

FERARI.

Not quite that; but of a sufficient freedom of action and life; it is only in London where it may be said the Jew is equal to the Christian. And if it were not that some of our brethren, steeped in the prejudices and vices that have been engendered of a

thousand years of persecution, trespass upon the English liberal and humane sentiment by evil deeds that we as a community would be the first ourselves to punish, London would come to forget entirely that a man were Jew or Gentile, except, if he were a Jew, to glorify him all the more for his good works.

KLOSSTOCK.

If thou wert not a Jew, and true as the ring of thine own gold, Andrea Ferari, thy words would be thine own condemnation; but, friend of many countries, do thou tell our daughter Anna of that City of the Sea, which is like the dream of a poet rather than a sober incident from the book of real experience; and whither our dear son, the rabbi, doth propose to travel with our loving daughter Anna—mayhap accompanied by their father—what sayest thou, Anna?

ANNA.

It is too much happiness to think upon.

KLOSSTOCK.

[*Addressing NEGRUTZ, who has entered quietly.*]
You may go to bed, Amos Negruz; we shall need your service no more to-night.

[*LOSINSKI and FERARI have eyed him with suspicion. NEGRUTZ bows and exits.*]

LOSINSKI.

[*Rising.*] Forgive me. [*Goes to door whence AMOS NEGRUTZ has disappeared; lifts heavy curtain, and stands for a moment in listening attitude.*] I will explain later.

[*KLOSSTOCK looks inquiringly at ANNA, whose hand, seeking his, he raises to his lips. She lays her head upon his shoulder.*

[*Returning and resuming seat.*] I do not like the man Amos Negrutz.

FERARI.

Nor do I.

KLOSSTOCK.

Nay, what has the poor fellow done?—[*To LOSINSKI.*] You thought him a good man, and useful, my son, until now.

LOSINSKI.

I did. It is only to-day that I doubt him—only to-night that I fear him.

KLOSSTOCK.

Fear him! Do I hear aright?

FERARI.

Where did he come from?

KLOSSTOCK.

From Elizabethgrad.

FERARI.

Recommended by one worthy of trust?

KLOSSTOCK.

Yes, truly, the merchant Chane.

FERARI.

[*Significantly.*] I thought so. Do you know the merchant Chane?

KLOSSTOCK.

Not to speak with him; but I know him by repute as one whose word is his bond, and who has large possessions.

FERARI.

Ha! [*Rises and paces the room for a moment, then pauses near the door, as if he listened for footsteps.*]

GRUNSTEIN.

Do you know him?

FERARI.

I do.

LOSINSKI.

I fear a cloud is gathering about us, but one which

may break far away if we are careful. I have kept watch over my words this evening that your servant might not hear of the warnings which have reached me within the last few hours from a trusted friend in St. Petersburg.

GRUNSTEIN.

Is it touching the new Governor ?

LOSINSKI.

It is.

GRUNSTEIN.

[*Nodding to KLOSSTOCK.*] I told you the news was bad.

FERARI.

Alas ! I can endorse it ; and I, too, have observed a reticent demeanour for the reason that this Amos is not what he represents himself to be.

LOSINSKI.

Forewarned is forearmed. The new Governor is on his way to Czarovna ; it may be possible to propitiate him ; I know that it is possible for him to reduce our lives to the miserable level of those of our brethren at Kiev. That we are an exception is due to exceptional causes. The hand of persecution lies heavy on our brethren all round about us.

KLOSSTOCK.

Our brethren are themselves much to blame. They make hard bargains; they thrive on the Christian need; they do no acts of charity outside the pale of settlement; they forget that God made us all.

FERARI.

They remember that the Christian has ground them beneath his heel; they remember that from age to age in all countries they have been harried by Christian fire and sword; and that even in these days of so-called charity, and education, and especially in this land of the Czar, they are the victims of harsh laws, aliens alike from freedom and justice, and compelled to kiss the rod that strikes them. No, my father, blame them not that they take their revenge.

KLOSSTOCK.

But I do blame them, my son; and I present to them and to you the example of Czarovna as proof of the good that comes of toleration.

FERARI.

Toleration! The merchant Chane is a tolerant man. Hush! We alarm our good young hostess.

LOSINSKI.

I have spoken something of this to Anna already, and we are accustomed to discuss many things outside the ordinary lines of education.

KLOSSTOCK.

Anna, it were well thou went to rest. Ferari is over-anxious about this new Governor. He will alarm thee, and even our dear Losinski is inclined to exaggerate the possibilities of the change of governorship. Parting with a kind and benevolent man, we should rejoice in his promotion.

FERARI.

If it is promotion.

KLOSSTOCK.

Be sure it is, dear friend. Let us not alarm ourselves unduly.

GRUNSTEIN.

And, above all, 'twere an ill turn to alarm our Anna on a night like this. Czarovna has many blessings.

KLOSSTOCK.

[*To ANNA.*] Thou art my blessing, Anna! [*Embraces her.*] And it grows late. Good-night!

ANNA.

[*To all.*] Good-night!

[*LOSINSKI accompanies her to door R., where WIDOW MORITZ has appeared ready to receive her. On her exit, LOSINSKI advances to table.*

LOSINSKI.

And I too will say good-night, dear friends; and God be with you! If there is such danger abroad as that which Andrea Ferari fears, it is well that I go amongst our people and warn them. Good-night.

[*Exit LOSINSKI. FERARI follows him to door, draws portière over it, then returns, and addresses GRUNSTEIN and KLOSSTOCK:*

FERARI.

Listen, both of you. The butchers are abroad. The red fury of barbarism is once more marching through the land. The flame has broken out at Elizabethgrad. The Jews, being forewarned of trouble, applied to the authorities for protection. Placards were issued informing the Orthodox Russians that the property of the Jews had been given over to them, and that they might take it. The Government did not deny the outrageous notification. The

Orthodox rose. The military presented themselves at the scene of the massacre, but only to encourage the cruel excesses.

KLOSSTOCK.

Didst thou say massacre?

FERARI.

I said massacre. But it was worse than massacre, my father; twenty-five good women, our dear sisters, were violated and died.

GRUNSTEIN.

Holy Father!

FERARI.

At the home of one, Mordecai Wienarski, the mob, disappointed of plunder, caught up his child and hurled it through the window. The infant fell dead at the feet of a company of Cossacks; but they moved neither to take it up nor to arrest the murderers. Two thousand of our brethren are houseless; thirty and more have gone to their long rest, many are grievously wounded, and the community has been plundered of property to the value of forty thousand English pounds.

KLOSSTOCK.

Thou strikest me dumb, Ferari!

FERARI.

To-morrow, perhaps to-night, your new Governor will arrive at the palace. I passed him on the way; he is travelling incognito. By this time General Poltava, your late Governor, is under arrest. I almost hate myself for being the bearer of such ill tidings; it is the bolt from the blue. I found you steeped in the happiness of virtue, good-feeling, and sweet content: I am a moral earthquake to your household bliss. But it is in one's happiest hours that Fate strikes us down.

GRUNSTEIN.

Who is this new Governor?

FERARI.

General Petronovitch, a man of a cruel disposition, who hates our chosen people and aids and abets their persecution. [*Turning to KLOSSTOCK.*] Nay, dear host, my good friend, be not impatient with me. I know what I say, know more than I dare tell you, more than some might say I ought, more, I hope, than is good for such as Petronovitch.

KLOSSTOCK.

I have never asked thee, Ferari, whence thou comest, or whither thou goest; but I trust to thy

love and discretion not to compromise this household with anything that can be called political.

FERARI.

Your trust is well placed ; I am here for the last time. Czarovna will see me no more, nor, indeed, will Russia, after I leave her accursed soil on this last journey.

KLOSSTOCK.

If you are compromised in the eyes of the Government, Andrea Ferari, it is hardly kind to have made this your chief house of call in Southern Russia.

FERARI.

I had no reason to believe that I was suspected until I left St. Petersburg this time, intending to go to Paris ; but a sudden knowledge of the change of Government here, and the departure of a certain man from the capital for Elizabethgrad and Czarovna, forced me, as I said before, out of the love I bear this household, to make my way hither.

[*Noise without.*

[*Hand on his knife.*] What is that ?

GRUNSTEIN.

Some late carrier from the country.

KLOSSTOCK.

You seem much disturbed.

FERARI.

I had a bad dream last night. I thought I was sitting here among you and that suddenly there started up, from behind the stove, a man, who said, "Andrea Ferari, thou art my prisoner!" The noise from without struck me curiously as if it were the prologue to my captivity.

KLOSSTOCK.

Hast thou been drinking, Andrea?

FERARI.

No, I am in my soberest senses; a little over-anxious for thy welfare perhaps; for this Governor—General Petronovitch—is a sensualist and a tyrant; he is believed to have instigated the rising against our chosen people at Elizabethgrad, and your friend Poltava's withdrawal from the province is not promotion, it is disgrace!

KLOSSTOCK and GRUNSTEIN.

[*Together.*] God forbid!

FERARI.

[*Addressing KLOSSTOCK.*] Moreover, thy new servant, Amos Negrutz, is a Government spy.

[*NEGRUTZ at this moment emerges from a dark corner behind the stove, covering FERARI with the shining barrel of a revolver, and a loud knocking is heard at the front of the house.*

NEGRUTZ.

[*Advancing towards FERARI.*] And he arrests thee, Andrea Ferari, as a traitor!—[*Half turning for a moment towards KLOSSTOCK.*] Do thou open thy door to the police?

[*A trumpet call is heard without. FERARI, who has drawn his knife, stands for a moment as if stupefied. As NEGRUTZ turns to KLOSSTOCK, FERARI leaps upon him, seizes him by the throat, stabs and flings him upon the floor. Then leaping over his body as troops break in from both doors, FERARI looks round for a moment, lifts latch of window, and dashes through, taking with him part of leaded panes with a crash, and disappears. Rifle shots heard.*

Enter SOLDIERS, GOVERNOR'S escort. After them, with OFFICERS, the new GOVERNOR, GENERAL PETRONOVITCH.

PETRONOVITCH.

Which of you is Nathan Klosstock ?

KLOSSTOCK.

I am he ! And you, sir, who thus disturb the peace of this household ?

PETRONOVITCH.

I am the Governor of the province. You and your fellow conspirators are my prisoners.

ANNA.

[Entering hurriedly from R.] Prisoners ! [Rushes to father, who folds her in his arms.]

[Guards stand round KLOSSTOCK, GRUNSTEIN, and the rest. Enter OFFICER L.]

PETRONOVITCH.

[Turning to OFFICER.] Well ?

OFFICER.

The traitor Ferari has escaped us !

PETRONOVITCH.

And our agent ?

SECOND OFFICER.

[*Pointing to body of NEGRUTZ, which is now being removed by SOLDIERS.*] Murdered !

PETRONOVITCH.

[*Turning to KLOSSTOCK.*] So you are the vile reptiles that have found favour with my predecessor ! Like Governor, like subject !

KLOSSTOCK.

We are no reptiles, may it please your Excellency.

PETRONOVITCH.

Dog of a Jew ! how comes it, then, that my Imperial Master's mandate is treated with contempt, his enemy permitted to escape, and his trusted agent murdered by thy friend and guest ? Vile traitor !

KLOSSTOCK.

I am no traitor to his Imperial Majesty, but an humble loving subject.

PETRONOVITCH.

Loving subject ? I spit upon thee, thou cursed Jew ! [*Takes cigarette from silver case and smokes.*]

KLOSSTOCK.

Sir, you do me wrong, and I pray your Excellency

respect my daughter, who has been trained to pray for his Imperial Majesty and to honour her father.

PETRONOVITCH.

Has she so, indeed ? [*Turning his eyes upon her.*] She does not honour thee in her handsome face, nor in her graceful figure. Stand forth, girl, thou needst not fear. Where is the man to whom thou art betrothed, as they tell me thou art ?

ANNA.

At home, no doubt, your Excellency.

Enter OFFICER.

OFFICER.

The Rabbi Losinski is without, your Excellency.

PETRONOVITCH.

Where was he taken ?

OFFICER.

At the synagogue, denouncing your Excellency to his fellow Jews and flock.

PETRONOVITCH.

Bring him before us, and your witnesses. He shall

have justice. Here on the scene of hostilities we will hold our court. [*Takes KLOSSTOCK's chair by table.*]

[*Guards force KLOSSTOCK, GRUNSTEIN, WIDOW MORITZ, and ANNA back.*]

Unless these cursed Jews give up the murderer Ferari, they shall suffer for it. He cannot have left Czarovna ; he is in hiding. I will flay them alive, every man and woman of them, but I will have the conspirator they are concealing. [*Turning towards group of prisoners.*] As for you, Nathan Klosstock, and you——

OFFICER.

[*Looking also towards them.*] Moses Grunstein, your Excellency, Nathan Klosstock's most intimate friend, and Martha Moritz, widow, housekeeper to the aforesaid Klosstock.

PETRONOVITCH.

You are committed to the prison of Vilnavitch. Your guilt is without question—you, Nathan Klossstock, are taken red-handed, harbouring a conspirator against his Imperial Majesty, and accessory to the murder of his trusted agent, Amos Negruz.

ANNA.

Oh, my father !

PETRONOVITCH.

[*Now turning to OFFICER.*] Where is this rabbi, this Marcus Losinski ?

[*OFFICER thrusts him forward into centre of stage.*

[*To LOSINSKI.*] Where have you hidden Andrea Ferari ?

LOSINSKI.

I knew not that he was in hiding.

PETRONOVITCH.

You lie, Jew !

LOSINSKI.

I knew not that he had any cause for hiding.

PETRONOVITCH.

You lie, Jew ! How were you engaged but now, at the moment of your arrest ?

LOSINSKI.

I was acquainting my humble flock with the sudden and unexpected change in the Government of this province.

PETRONOVITCH.

You lie, Jew! You were denouncing the faithful servant of his Imperial Majesty, you were fomenting rebellion.

LOSINSKI.

Arraign me before the judges in open court, and let me know the charges you bring against me, and I shall know how to defend myself.

PETRONOVITCH.

I do arraign you now, before this Court-Martial, this Council of War. Do you deny the truth of what I allege? You shall see that I am just if I am severe, as it behoves justice to be in these days of conspiracy and rebellion. Stand forth, you Judas, there!

[OFFICER *thrusts forward* JETHRO, *a half-demented, imbecile wretch.*

You heard this man—this Rabbi Losinski—warn his flock against me, the Governor, appointed by our Holy Father the Czar?

JETHRO.

I did.

PETRONOVITCH.

He said they might neither expect justice nor charity from me?

JETHRO.

Yes.

PETRONOVITCH.

You hear, Jew! You shall see how just I am, how generous are my brother councillors. What do you say to this evidence?

LOSINSKI.

May I ask your witness a question?—[*Turning to witness.*] Did I advise anything but gentle submission to the new Governor and careful observance of the law?

JETHRO.

No—O God, forgive me! [*Covers face with his hands.*]

PETRONOVITCH.

Stand up, Judas! That meant, "Be careful how you rebel, but rebel; not in open day, but the Governor Petronovitch is unworthy of his position, he is a tyrant; his Imperial Majesty has sent amongst you an unjust and cruel officer; rebel against him,

but have a care—do it secretly.” That is what you mean, eh, wretch ?

JETHRO.

Oh, yes, your Excellency ! God forgive me !

PETRONOVITCH.

You, Losinski, are a cut-throat Jew—a rebel, a traitor to the State, and for this I will make an example of you. You are condemned to receive fifty blows of the knout in the public place of execution.

ANNA.

[*With a loud cry of*] Mercy ! mercy ! [*staggers towards PETRONOVITCH and falls.*]

END OF ACT I.

Act II

SCENE I.—*The office of General Petronovitch at the Palace of the Government.*

[PETRONOVITCH *discovered at table with wine and cigarettes and papers. Enter PAULOFF, a military servant.*

PAULOFF.

The Jew merchant's daughter. I told her you could not give audience to any one.

PETRONOVITCH.

You are a fool!

PAULOFF.

Yes, Excellency : I said I would inquire if you had leisure.

PETRONOVITCH.

Admit her ; see that we are not disturbed.

[*Exit PAULOFF.*

[*Smiles and drains tumbler to the dregs.*] By the

mass, a pleasant encounter; I would not have wished for a more agreeable visit. She comes to beg for her lover. Pauloff! [*Rings bell by the side of cigar-box.*] Pauloff!

Enter PAULOFF.

Listen.

PAULOFF.

Yes, Excellency.

PETRONOVITCH.

If I call you and give you an order to postpone the punishment of the man Losinski, in presence of this Jew girl, you will not deliver it. Do you understand?—written or verbal, do you understand?

PAULOFF.

Yes, Excellency. She is here.

PETRONOVITCH.

Let her come in. Guard the door without; admit no one.

[PAULOFF *bows and exits.*

• ANNA *enters and kneels.*

No, no; you may not kneel to me.

ANNA.

Mercy for the rabbi! Save my father! It can be

no joy to you to bring such terrible suffering upon us—it can do no good to our great Emperor ; better it would be to take our money, our jewels, our property : that will buy your soldiers' clothes, feed your poor, make your ladies happy ; take it—give us our lives and liberty—we ask no more.

PETRONOVITCH.

My dear young lady, do not distress yourself. I am not the tyrant your Losinski would make out ; but I owe a duty to my Imperial master. I do not want your money, nor does my Government ; we only desire peace and order. We are pained to find such reputable persons as your father harbouring a conspirator who, on being arrested, cuts the throat of our Imperial master's officer, and escapes by the connivance of your father, the master of the house. And when we are in our most generous mood of narrowing justice down to the criminal only, and considering the previous good conduct of his associates, the rabbi, a learned and scholarly man, incites his flock against us the Governor, denouncing us as the corrupt and cruel agent of a corrupt and unjust Government.

ANNA.

If he did so, he knew not what he said, your

Excellency ! Oh, forgive him ! His Greatness the Czar has no truer subject—mercy ! oh, be merciful !

PETRONOVITCH.

Be seated, child, and let us talk the matter over.

ANNA.

Do not ask me to sit ; when I flew here for succour they were dragging the rabbi through the streets I know not whither, and they said he was condemned to a punishment worse than death. Great God ! while I stand here he may be suffering. Oh, sir, spare him ! Hark ! I hear his voice ; he calls me—he is dying !

PETRONOVITCH.

This is madness ; listen, my poor girl. I *will* spare him. *There*—he is saved !

ANNA.

Heaven bless you ! [*Kisses his hand.*] God will bless you. But how is he to know you will spare him ? How will they know he is to be saved ?

PETRONOVITCH.

If you will promise to be quiet and remain here, and let me know your wishes and not distress yourself, you shall hear the order given for the postpone-

ment of his punishment, and you shall yourself bear away with you the order for his release.

ANNA.

Bless you ! [*Staggers to a seat.*]

PETRONOVITCH.

[*Ringing his bell.*] Pauloff !

PAULOFF *enters.*

Bring me pen and ink.

[PAULOFF *goes to cabinet, brings writing materials.* PETRONOVITCH *writes upon a sheet of paper, folds it, and hands to* PAULOFF.

An order for the postponement of the punishment of the Rabbi Losinski ; send a messenger to the Commander of the prison forthwith.

[ANNA *covers her face with her hands, and weeps tears of joy.*

Will you read the order, madame ? [*Showing it to her.*]

ANNA.

No, no ; I trust you.

PETRONOVITCH.

And the messenger will inform the Commander

that the order for Losinski's release shall follow—you understand ?

PAULOFF.

Yes, your Excellency.

[*Exit PAULOFF.*

[*PETRONOVITCH follows, and quietly raising portière, bolts the door. Then approaches ANNA, and lays hand upon her shoulder.*

PETRONOVITCH.

There, we are not so black as we are painted, are we ?

ANNA.

You are very merciful.

[*PETRONOVITCH takes seat by her side.*

PETRONOVITCH.

And what is to be my reward for all this, and the much more that I am to do for you ?

ANNA.

Eternal thanks and prayers, and the blessed consciousness of a great act of charity.

PETRONOVITCH.

Just so ! And so you are to marry the rabbi ?

ANNA.

Yes. [*Permitting his near approach without a movement one way or the other, willing to submit to some amount of insult for the sake of the man she loves.*]

PETRONOVITCH.

He is to be envied. [*Stealing his arm round her.*]

ANNA.

Your Excellency is pleased to be merry after your act of mercy.

PETRONOVITCH.

I am pleased with you, and I hope you are not displeased with me?

ANNA.

You are very good; I owe you a deep debt of gratitude.

PETRONOVITCH.

[*Taking her hand.*] It is easily paid.

ANNA.

It can never be sufficiently acknowledged. [*Moving a little way from him.*] My father and my future husband will never cease to bless you.

PETRONOVITCH.

I prefer to be in your thoughts—and in your arms.
[*Kisses her, roughly, brutally.*]

[ANNA struggles ; frees herself from his grasp.

ANNA.

You propose too much honour for a poor Jewess.
Pray now, sir, permit me to withdraw.

PETRONOVITCH.

You are worthy of an emperor—no Christian is more beautiful.

ANNA.

But your Excellency knows that I am to be married to one of my own people. You may not marry a Jewess, be she ever so wealthy.

PETRONOVITCH.

Oh, yes, I may. We are not so particular when beauty is in the case—such beauty as yours.

[ANNA retreats before him. He follows her.]

I frighten you. Nay, let us talk about that release : I have only to write it. [*She stands still ; he approaches her, and she permits him to take her hand.*]

ANNA.

Now, let me go, dear sir, and I will come again to-morrow.

PETRONOVITCH.

You make me jealous of the very man I am about to release. [*Puts his arm about her waist once more.*]

ANNA.

Let me see him free, and I will come to you the next moment.

PETRONOVITCH.

No, my darling, I cannot spare you.

[*Takes her roughly in his arms. The next moment she is free, a knife which she had concealed in her dress in her hand, her attitude defiant and violent.*]

ANNA.

Let me go, or call in your servants to carry me out dead!

[*For a second PETRONOVITCH is checked. But he is not daunted either by the knife or by ANNA's threats, though he pretends to be.*]

PETRONOVITCH.

Forgive me. I thought that you Jewish girls were kind and generous. I had no idea you carried for lovers such formidable greetings as poignards. We are to know more of each other before we are friends?

Well, so be it. Forgive me, and I forgive you. Put up your knife, and keep your promise, for I am now going to put your word to the test—the moment you see him free, you will come to me?

ANNA.

[*Off her guard, and replacing her knife in her bosom, as PETRONOVITCH takes up his pen to write the order for LOSINSKI's release.*] I said so.

PETRONOVITCH.

I give you my word I will not molest you. Be seated. I only now desire to have your rabbi released that I may see how you ladies of the chosen people keep your word.

[*Entirely accepting this view of the case as the dénouement of her visit, ANNA sits down and calmly awaits the order for her lover's release. PETRONOVITCH, having written it, offers it to her, and then as she holds out her hand for it, flings his arms around her, snatches the knife from her bosom, and drags her into an adjoining room, her cry for help being heard above the crash of the heavy door as it closes behind them.*

END OF SCENE.

SCENE II.—*The Market-place of Czarovna. On Backoloth, church, scattered houses, and distant hills. L.U.C., platform and whipping block built with practical gallery leading into second floor of prison L.; seats for spectators and officials. On stage proper, R. houses: L. chief entrance to prison. Scene opens with crowd that increases as act goes on. Entrances R., L.*

MOUJIK.

It was high time the Jew dogs should suffer.

WOMAN.

Nay, the Klosstocks have been good friends to us.

MOUJIK.

Friends! No right to be friends. Their money is ours, and their goods, so reads the Imperial ukase. We have allowed them to be our equals, when they should have been our slaves, as they will henceforth.

WOMAN.

They have been good neighbours.

MOUJIK.

No right to be neighbours.

A JEW.

Thank you for that good word. [*To MOUJIK.*] I saved your child's life. Do not turn from us in our misery.

MOUJIK.

The avengers and dispossessors are coming hither from Elizabethgrad, bringing the ukase ; it is the law that you be expelled the province. Here is one of them.

Enter DICK CHETWYND.

CHETWYND.

No, friend, I am only a visitor.

MOUJIK.

A visitor ?

CHETWYND.

From England.

MOUJIK.

Never heard of it. What part of Russia ?

CHETWYND.

No part of Russia.—[*Aside.*] Thank God !

MOUJIK.

[*Pushing aside* JEW and WOMAN.] Here, make way for the Great Czar's troops.

[*A file of* SOLDIERS *enter and take up positions*
L., near prison and below platform.]

CHETWYND.

[To MOUJIK.] Why so rough, friend ?

MOUJIK.

Why not ?

CHETWYND.

No matter.—[*Aside.*] If I had you in England, I'd show you.

WOMAN.

[To JEW.] You have staunch friends among us Orthodox Russians ; but too few, alas !

FERARI.

[*Disguised as old man.*] Before this unhappy day is over many a Jew woman will need succour. Help them, even as the Klosstocks have helped you.

WOMAN.

I will, I will.

CHETWYND.

[To FERARI.] I beg your pardon, what is going on here ?

FERARI.

An English tourist, if he values his life, had better look on and not ask questions.

CHETWYND.

It is my business to ask questions. Do you belong to this place ?

FERARI.

No, I am a traveller, as you are.

CHETWYND.

Travelled far ?

FERARI.

From St. Petersburg ; and you ?

CHETWYND.

From Elizabethgrad.

FERARI.

Indeed ! Friend or foe ?

CHETWYND.

I am a journalist, from London.

FERARI.

Great Jehovah ! what a people it is ! You will be killed.

CHETWYND.

I think not.

FERARI.

For the Jew or the Russian?

CHETWYND.

The impartial historian of both.

FERARI.

And have you told the story of the violence and bloodshed of Tereda, Cherson, and——?

CHETWYND.

Not got off my dispatches yet—hope to. You are one of the chosen—can you help me?

FERARI.

How? Speak quickly.

CHETWYND.

The story's no good in my pocket. I want to wire it to London.

FERARI.

No operator dare send the truth.

CHETWYND.

A messenger, then, across the frontier to Germany.

FERARI.

Seek me later, at Moses Grunstein's, but speak no more now—we are watched.

Enter PETRONOVITCH R., with Guard. Crowd increases. Guard pushes people back—way made for PETRONOVITCH. Enter hastily COUNT STRAVENSKY.

STRAVENSKY.

[*To PETRONOVITCH.*] Your Excellency, pardon me, I have known these people for many years; they are loyal and honest men and women.

PETRONOVITCH.

No doubt—the loyalty that cloaks treason.

STRAVENSKY.

No, upon my soul, Russia has no better subjects than the Klosstocks.

PETRONOVITCH.

And their vile rabbi, eh?

STRAVENSKY.

I dare offer bonds for his good behaviour.

PETRONOVITCH.

And forge bonds for yourself, Sir Count. Have a care !

STRAVENSKY.

You will excuse my persistency when you know all.

PETRONOVITCH.

Your appeal comes too late.

STRAVENSKY.

It is never too late for a merciful action.

PETRONOVITCH.

Justice is mercy, and the safety of the province demands justice.

STRAVENSKY.

Who threatens the province? The Jews of the Ghetto? Don't forget that I speak with authority no less than your own.

PETRONOVITCH.

At St. Petersburg perhaps, Sir Count. It is a long way to St. Petersburg, and this is Czarovna, in the province of Vilnavitch, and I am its Governor. Stand aside, Sir Count—this is no time for controversy.

STRAVENSKY.

Controversy! The Jew is the Czar's subject, he has his lawful rights, he has——

PETRONOVITCH.

[*Interrupting.*] No rights; he encumbers the earth, he eats the bread of the Christian, he is an alien, a traitor.

STRAVENSKY.

You speak in anger, General.

PETRONOVITCH.

I am responsible for my words and my actions to his Imperial Majesty. I know my duty; I will teach you yours. Begone to your château, and remain there under pain of arrest until this revolt against my Imperial master is crushed. Begone, sir! [*Motions Guard to advance.*]

[*PETRONOVITCH and Guard enter prison beneath platform.*]

STRAVENSKY.

[*Going.*] You shall live to regret this day, General Petronovitch.

FERARI.

Beware, Count Stravensky; even you may become suspect.

STRAVENSKY.

Who are you?

FERARI.

[*In low voice.*] Yesterday, Ferari the Jew.

STRAVENSKY.

[*Suppressing astonishment.*] And to-day?

FERARI.

Goldstein the banker, with a message to his friend Count Stravensky.

STRAVENSKY.

You are a man of courage.

FERARI.

Nay, but of great resource. I am staying with Moses Grunstein.

STRAVENSKY.

Come to me at night—I may need your counsel; to-morrow I shall start for St. Petersburg. Do you know anything of the girl Anna? She is missing since yesterday.

FERARI.

She went to petition the Governor for her lover's life, it is said.

STRAVENSKY.

The wolf and the lamb.

FERARI.

I lent her a knife.

OFFICER.

[*From the prison, comes up to them.*] Count Stravensky, I am ordered to escort you to your château.

[STRAVENSKY bows and exits with OFFICER.]

CHETWYND.

[*To FERARI.*] Seems to be trouble among the authorities—what is it?

FERARI.

I asked you not to address me again.

CHETWYND.

Everybody else I speak to is a fool or worse.

FERARI.

I am but a fool myself, sir, but not fool enough to be seen talking to a foreign newspaper man, and an Englishman, at such a time as this. [*Moves away.*]

CHETWYND.

I have met people who would think it an honour to be seen talking to Dick Chetwynd.

[Murmurs and cries off.]

[Looks off.] Things look ugly. A repetition of the Potalva massacre before the night's over. Dick, my friend, you must be wary. Seek him at Moses Grunstein's; where the devil is Moses Grunstein's?

[Drums beat, crowd increases. Enter from prison on gallery, Governor's escort. OFFICERS and PETRONOVITCH take up their positions. LOSINSKI brought out, stripped to waist and in fetters. Executioner with knout following. Crowd murmurs; cries and shouts off.]

Enter ANNA, distraught, dishevelled; pauses, looks round.

ANNA.

Oh, my brothers, are ye men, to stand by and see your rabbi murdered? Great Jehovah curse this cruel host of the fiendish Czar!

FERARI.

Peace, daughter, for heaven's sake!

ANNA.

[*Without heeding him.*] There he stands ! [*Pointing to PETRONOVITCH.*] The false Governor, the traitor, the liar, the Christian Tarquin !

[*Jews gather about her. The moujiks get together in company. A soldier attempts to approach ANNA. A scuffle ; he is forced back. Fighting begins here and there.*

Men of the Ghetto ! look to your wives and daughters. You knew me a pure, good woman ; your vile Governor Petronovitch has put upon me an everlasting curse ! I am no longer fit to die by the side of my betrothed. Avenge me for the love of your women and babes !

JETHRO (*the imbecile*).

Down with the false Governor Petronovitch !

[*Fighting increases. Troops begin to take part. Executioner flings LOSINSKI down upon whipping bench, where two Guards strap him to bench, head and heels. ANNA is the centre of fighting group.*

Oh, rabbi, father, forgive me ! I betrayed you.

[*Fight begins to be general. CHETWYND seen defending himself.*

FERARI.

[*Wielding a long knife.*] Fight for your lives !

[*Saves JETHRO, who is, however, struck down by soldier, who is instantly stabbed by FERARI.*

ANNA.

God is with us ! He will send down His fires upon them ! [*She is seized by soldier with whom she struggles—FERARI stabs him.*

CHETWYND.

If they'd only fought like this at Potalva ! But, after all, poor devils, what is the good ?

[*As CHETWYND speaks, PETRONOVITCH and Guard leave scaffold and overcome the tumult, and drag ANNA upon the scaffold. She is handed to Executioner. PETRONOVITCH gives an order in pantomime. Executioner lays hands upon her. She stands forward with dignity.*

END OF ACT II.



Act III

SCENE.—*Philip Forsyth's studio in Venice. Open balcony windows with backcloth of canal or Venetian palaces or bridge—characteristic bit of Venice. Entrances R. and L. In R. U. E. portière and suggestion of alcove or store-room. Easy chair or two, old Venetian seat, two or three easels with pictures upon them—several canvases about; one or two rugs here and there; table; small sideboard on which there are cigars, wine, etc.*

Enter HENSHAW, who is PHILIP'S servant and occasionally his model, showing in DICK CHETWYND and COLONEL MAURICE DE BARSAC, the Private Secretary and man of business of the COUNTESS STRAVENSKY, but who is FERARI, his second alias.

CHETWYND.

Master out, Henshaw?

HENSHAW.

Yes, sir. If you called I was to make you free of the studio. What can I offer you, sir?

CHETWYND.

[*To FERARI.*] What can Mr. Henshaw offer us, Colonel ?

FERARI.

A glass of Capri with a cigarette is quite Venetian ; is it not so, monsieur ?

CHETWYND.

If Mr. Henshaw has a little ice, eh, Henshaw ?

HENSHAW.

Oh, yes, Mr. Chetwynd, plenty ! [*Opens refrigerator and takes out ice in a bowl and places it on sideboard and proceeds to open wine ; as he does so FERARI offers cigarette-case to DICK and they light up.*]

CHETWYND.

[*As HENSHAW is pouring out wine.*] Your master still looking for his model ?

HENSHAW.

Yes, sir ; more persevering than ever.

CHETWYND.

And more despairing ?

HENSHAW.

Well, sir, I think he is ; I dessay he might have

done just as well in Shoreditch as in the Ghetto here, though I allow it's more picturesque in Venice.

CHETWYND.

That's very good of you, Henshaw.

HENSHAW.

But I like London for all that, and, as for models, why, there ain't no kind of nationality you need sigh for and not get in Soho.

CHETWYND.

You sit for the master now and then, Henshaw?

HENSHAW.

Why, yes, sir, I sat for "The Exile of Erin" in his last Academy picture, leastwise for the clothes, when the original Irishman was took up suspicious in connection with the blowing up of the West End Club.

FERARI.

It is not, then, Paris or St. Petersburg alone that blow up, as you say? You, too, have your social eruptions.

CHETWYND.

Oh, yes; then, you see, we are such a down-trodden people in London; can't do anything we want to; won't

let us drive a railway through Westminster Abbey, nor hold public meetings in St. Paul's.

FERARI.

It is not easy, monsieur, to tell when you are in earnest, or what you call in fun.

CHETWYND.

Earnestness is an old fogey nowadays in England, Colonel de Barsac ; we have to disguise him in a mask and call him cynicism.

FERARI.

Ah, I do not understand you.

CHETWYND.

You compliment me. The less a man is understood the more important he becomes.

FERARI.

Is it that you think we all wear our little masks, monsieur ?

CHETWYND.

With a difference. [*Crosses to HENSHAW.*]

FERARI.

[*To himself.*] Some faces cannot be disguised.
[*Aloud.*] Your mask becomes you, M. Chetwynd.

CHETWYND.

And yours ?

FERARI.

I nevaire wear him, monsieur ; I am the simple secretary of the illustrious Countess Stravensky.

HENSHAW.

Is there anything else I can do for you ?

CHETWYND.

No, thank you, Henshaw ; we will try and amuse ourselves until the master comes.

[*Exit* HENSHAW.]

My friend Philip is the youngest English Academician ; he will interest you.

FERARI.

Are we in earnest now ?

CHETWYND.

Tremendously. His election was a surprise, not on account of his talent, but the Royal Academy is a conservative institution, and Forsyth is everything that is the opposite. He was born in Russia ; his father was a railway contractor. All the boy's earliest recollections are Russian, and, between ourselves, he has a desperately bad opinion of the

Great White Czar, of whose Court your Countess Stravensky is such a lovely example. What a beautiful woman she is !

FERARI.

And good as she is beautiful ! I have reason to say so, for I have the honour to be her secretary, steward, and man of business, ever since the death of the Count, her husband ; but do not think she is orthodox of the orthodox ; Imperialist, yes ; but with a full appreciation of your English Constitution.

CHETWYND.

The Count Stravensky ! A remarkable death-bed, was it not ? Now I remember ; he married his wife a few hours before he died, eh ? Some Russian girl who had been educated in Paris ? She was an orphan, the friend of the daughter of a Russian general who lost his life in the Caucasus ; is it not so ?

FERARI.

It was a romantic marriage.

CHETWYND.

Very rich, was he not ? Had realised his estates in Russia before settling in France ?

FERARI.

Most of them. It was said he had a mission to promote a French alliance with Russia.

CHETWYND.

His estates were in the province of Vilnavitch, not far from Czarovna ?

FERARI.

I believe so.

CHETWYND.

Forsyth will want to paint her. Hasn't seen her, I suppose, yet. He is wild just now on some Russian subject. I have not seen him for a year ; met him yesterday. Stopped me and flung his unfinished picture at me as if we had only parted an hour before. "The very man I wanted to see," he said. "You were in Southern Russia during the risings against the Jews?" "Yes," I said. "I want to talk to you about Russia and the exile system and a lot of things. Come and see me ; I am living in Venice for the present : worried about a model that eludes me like a will-o'-the-wisp." "May I bring a friend?" I asked. "Certainly, anybody ; good-bye for the present ! Very glad to see you again, old fellow !" And away he went in search of his model.

FERARI.

And you were in Russia during the Jewish disturbances five years ago?

CHETWYND.

Yes; happened to be in St. Petersburg on a mission for *The Times*; got a military tip that something was going on in the South, and was in time for the trouble in Elizabethgrad and the province of Vilnavitch.

FERARI.

The trouble culminated in Czarovna, did it not?

CHETWYND.

I believe so.

FERARI.

Were you at Czarovna?

CHETWYND.

Yes; and you are the second Russian who has asked me the same question to-day.

FERARI.

Frenchman, but *n'importe*. And the other?

CHETWYND.

The famous Petronovitch, whom your Government

has sent over with his lovely Princess to do honour to the King and make, if possible, a diplomatic check-mate to Germany.

FERARI.

Did he remind you of the affair at Czarovna ?

CHETWYND.

No ; he received me so graciously, and was so unaffected and pleasant, that I ventured to remind him of our previous meeting, when I needed all my credentials, I think, to save my back.

FERARI.

Your back ?

CHETWYND.

Well, you see, he had a fancy for the whipping-block and the knout, and was inclined to resent my professional appearance on the scene.

FERARI.

The Russians don't like what you call the bull's-eye of the Press to be turned upon their great acts of justice, Mr. Chetwynd.

CHETWYND.

Justice !

FERARI.

Ah, I see you think that is a word they don't understand in Russia.

CHETWYND.

Not with this General Petronovitch as its interpreter. Yet what a power he is! He is fortunate in his marriage; his trip to England, France, and Italy may be said to be his honeymoon, eh?

FERARI.

So I am told. She is a beautiful woman, his wife, the Princess Ipponovna. But the match was more political than one of affection; Russian beauties are willing to sacrifice themselves for their country.

CHETWYND.

I thought she did not look happy.

Enter hurriedly PHILIP FORSYTH.

PHILIP.

Ah, there you are! How good of you to come so soon!

CHETWYND.

[*Shaking hands warmly.*] Permit me, Philip, to present to you Colonel Maurice de Barsac.

PHILIP.

I am glad to see you, sir. Any friend of Chetwynd's is a friend of mine.

FERARI.

Thank you, Mr. Forsyth.

PHILIP.

So Henshaw has made you welcome ! Well, I don't mind if I join you ; it is very hot to-day, and the Ghetto is not too salubrious.

CHETWYND.

You are looking for your model among the Jews ?

PHILIP.

Yes ; among a race so persecuted I ought to find my ideal, but I don't. [*Drinks.*] You are not a Russian, I hope ?

FERARI.

I have the honour to act as private secretary to the Countess Stravensky, who belongs to the Russian nobility.

PHILIP.

Then you believe in the severe virtues of the

fortress of Peter and Paul, and in administrative exile, and the rest ?

FERARI.

I am a Frenchman, and believe in liberty and the rights of man ; but, as the secretary of a great Russian countess, I may not speak against Peter or Paul.

CHETWYND.

But you may show us your Russian picture all the same.

PHILIP.

Your friend may regard it as disrespectful to his Government.

FERARI.

My Government is France.

CHETWYND.

Not yet marching with Russia across the German frontier, so go ahead, dear friend.

FERARI.

I shall feel it an honour to achieve your confidence as M. Chetwynd desires.

PHILIP.

Very well ; I am most anxious to have Chetwynd's

opinion ; he does not know how I have missed his encouragement and advice all this time. [*Goes to door and calls.*] Henshaw !

Enter HENSHAW.

[*Gives him key.*] Bring me the easel in from the alcove.

[*HENSHAW wheels in large easel, unlocks lower part, which is padlocked, assists PHILIP to place it for the guests, then withdraws.*

May I act as showman ? I will tell you what I want to paint, not what I have done. It is a group of prisoners on the march, attended by Cossacks of the Don and Tartar guards. The wiry steeds of the Cossacks and their tall lances break up the monotonous line of the travellers afoot, emphasising the crouching despondency of some and the defiant carriage of others among the forlorn crowd. In the foreground a prisoner has fallen by the way. He is young, and has collapsed from bodily fatigue. The one woman of the group, in the act of stooping to assist him, is thrust back with the butt of a trooper's rifle. She turns towards the soldier a mingled look of appeal and hatred. It is a beautiful face, stamped with a suffering that has no resignation in it. The eyes are sunken but full of fire. The low, well-knit

forehead is wrinkled with pain. The mouth is pursed into an expression of angry revolt. If ever the time for vengeance came, you should feel that this woman would not abhor the assassin's knife or the dynamiter's shell ; and as to the captive whose physical strength is not equal to the spirit of the martyr, I trust you may be finding yourselves hoping that he will speedily be released from the living death to which his companions are journeying.

FERARI.

It is a fine picture !

PHILIP.

No, sir ; a fine failure ; but I hope to get it right. You see, I thought it rather good until a week ago. At the Opera I saw a face I shall never forget. It was partially hidden by the box curtains that draped it, the neck being in shadow, the remainder of the figure hidden, a woman with the suffering of a century in her eyes—suffering and consuming passion, the pallid face of a prison, the tenderness of an angel warped into the lofty scorn of a Marie Antoinette with the murderous fire of a Charlotte Corday, an indescribable creature—the very woman I want for my model. Do you know the story of Madame Lapukin ? It was in 1760 ; she was

publicly flogged by order of the Empress, her tongue torn out, then cured of her wounds and sent to Siberia, beautiful through all. When I saw the woman at the Opera I seemed to see Madame Lapukin. I have since come to the conclusion that I was dreaming. I went round to the box—I knew the people; they said no other lady had been in their box; it seemed to me as if she had left some other part of the house to get a secret view of the Petronovitch box. Perhaps she hated the Princess; a rival, who knows? But I wish I had not seen her, or that I might see her again—she has spoiled my picture.

FERARI.

A very romantic story, and, despite your modesty, sir, I must say a very noble and beautiful work.

CHETWYND.

No doubt about it!

FERARI.

[*Looking at his watch, and then looking out from window.*] The Countess Stravensky's gondola is coming round the canal by the bridge. She is at leisure, I know. May I bring her to see your picture, Mr. Forsyth?

PHILIP.

If she will not order my arrest for painting such a subject.

FERARI.

Art is above politics. Have I your permission?

PHILIP.

I shall feel honoured, sir.

FERARI.

I shall bring her.—[*Aside.*] He shall find his model; and the brotherhood a new disciple.

[*Exit FERARI.*]

CHETWYND.

This woman whom you cannot find has hit you hard.

PHILIP.

Dick, I sometimes feel that she is my fate, and that I am painting some coming incident in my own life.

CHETWYND.

And the Norcotts, Phil; are we engaged?

PHILIP.

I have a rival, a young stockbroker, one Sam Swynford.

CHETWYND.

A stockbroker ! Does Cupid wing his darts with scrip of Afrikanders, or incandescent gas ?

PHILIP.

With all the feathers with which finance can wing the golden darts of Threadneedle Street. A good sort of fellow—rich, young, and a patron of the arts.

CHETWYND.

But——

PHILIP.

Yes ; there it is ! Mrs. Milbanke, her widowed sister whom you admire, declares that Jenny loves me to distraction ; but I fancy the idea of the match is rather hers than Jenny's ; Mrs. Milbanke has a soul for art I do believe. Jenny thinks she has, and wants to please her sister. Swynford has the fascination of wealth and leisure, and says he's a slave to beauty, more particularly to the beauties of Milbanke Lodge. Why, that is Mrs. Milbanke's voice.

CHETWYND.

Are they in Venice, then ?

PHILIP.

Oh, yes ; for the *fêtes*.

Enter HENSHAW.

HENSHAW.

Mrs. Milbanke.

Enter MRS. MILBANKE, pretty, well-dressed widow in half-mourning. She pauses coquettishly at door.

MRS. MILBANKE.

Anything dreadful going on ?

PHILIP.

Not at present.

MRS. MILBANKE.

No model behind the screen ?

PHILIP.

Not yet.

MRS. MILBANKE.

Then we may come in ?

PHILIP.

Oh, yes !

MRS. MILBANKE.

Dolly is with me.

PHILIP.

[*Going to her.*] My dear Mrs. Milbanke, come in !

MRS. MILBANKE.

[*Entering.*] Dolly stayed to speak to the porter's wife. I thought I would reconnoitre; you know what a shock we had when you were painting, "Venus Rising from the Sea," or something of the kind.

PHILIP.

Very sorry, but it was not my fault, you know.

MRS. MILBANKE.

[*Looking back.*] Oh, here she is! Come along; there is nothing dreadful going on [*sees* CHETWYND]—except Mr. Chetwynd. Why, Mr. Chetwynd, how do you do? I have not seen you for years!

CHETWYND.

Months; flattering, that to you they should seem years.

Enter DOLLY. She is received by PHILIP.

DOLLY.

Jenny, you should not leave me in that way. There was a crowd to see some famous Russian countess alight from her gondola, and the porter's wife went off into hysterics of admiration. Oh, Philip, how do you do?

PHILIP.

I am very well, Dolly ; and you ?

DOLLY.

I hate crowds that stare after a pretty woman.
Must make her feel awfully vain !

PHILIP.

You are not awfully vain, Dolly, and I have seen
crowds stare at you.

DOLLY.

You said they were only looking at my hat. Is
this your new picture that bothers you so ? I thought
it was to be a secret until it was finished.

PHILIP.

I fear it never will be finished, Dolly.

CHETWYND.

Oh, yes, it will ! Everything is finished at last.

MRS. MILBANKE.

[*Who has been looking at picture.*] It is one of Mr.
Forsyth's dreams of liberty, I suppose.

CHETWYND.

Rather a gloomy dream of liberty !

DOLLY.

Philip does have disagreeable dreams.

CHETWYND.

Not always ; *you* are looking charming this morning.

DOLLY.

But I am not one of his dreams. I am a very serious reality, am I not, Mr. Philip Forsyth, R.A. ?

PHILIP.

Not very serious, Dolly.

DOLLY.

Now he is going to scold me for being frivolous. Mr. Chetwynd shall protect me.

CHETWYND.

I shall be delighted.

MRS. MILBANKE.

Oh, don't you trouble, Mr. Chetwynd ; Sam Swynford will be here presently—he is Dolly's champion, unattached.

CHETWYND.

Indeed, I thought he was very much attached.

MRS. MILBANKE.

To me, yes, he is, and I am proud of him.

Enter HENSHAW with tea on tray, and bread and butter.

Oh, here you are! I ventured, my dear Philip, to ask for some tea ; Henshaw is always so obliging.

PHILIP.

I hope so.

[HENSHAW places tea on table.

And the cigarettes, Henshaw.

[HENSHAW places cigarette-box and elegant small lighted lamp on table.

MRS. MILBANKE.

Nothing so *chic* as afternoon tea in a bachelor's studio. And cigarettes! Unforbidden fruit in Paradise! Shall I play the hostess?

PHILIP.

I feared you were going to say the Eve. [Sees DOLLY looking at picture, and goes to her.]

CHETWYND.

Would our first mother have touched that tree if it hadn't been forbidden, I wonder?

MRS. MILBANKE.

Why, of course not. Life is a continual scramble after the forbidden. [*Pouring tea.*] Do you take sugar? Of course you do. [*Puts in sugar.*]

CHETWYND.

And yet a man might dare to dream of afternoon tea every day, with Mrs. Milbanke asking him if he'll take sugar.

MRS. MILBANKE.

If the dream came true, she would no longer be Mrs. Milbanke.

CHETWYND.

I suppose not; that's the pity of it.

MRS. MILBANKE.

You prefer the forbidden Paradise?

CHETWYND.

No; it would worry me to think of the inevitable angel with the two-edged sword. I would prefer a pleasant, well-secured freehold. And you?

MRS. MILBANKE.

And me! Well, I must say you have a very sudden and original way of——

CHETWYND.

Pardon me, you anticipate ; I was only asking your opinion.

MRS. MILBANKE.

Indeed ! It sounded serious ; but there, it is all the same. I should have reserved my defence, as the well-advised prisoner says. Won't you smoke ?

CHETWYND.

[*Taking cigarette, MRS. MILBANKE holding lamp while he lights it.*] And you ? Another question, you perceive.

MRS. MILBANKE.

Still letting I dare not wait upon I would. No, thank you. When it was taboo I used to take a cigarette and hate it ; now that it is anybody's habit it is no longer mine.

[*They go aside, continuing conversation sotto voce, and strolling to outlook upon canal.*]

DOLLY.

[*Looking at picture, and speaking to PHILIP.*] You don't think I appreciate your work, Philip ? I am sure I try to do so.

PHILIP.

I am sure you do, dear.

DOLLY.

[*Looking critically at picture.*] Rather a mannish woman, isn't she?

PHILIP.

Do you think so?

DOLLY.

The kind of woman that drives a motor and defies the police!

PHILIP.

That was not quite my idea.

DOLLY.

[*Intent on picture, and not attending to PHILIP's last remark.*] Has to look like that because she's tragic, I suppose? Jenny says you think her lovely. I like the young fellow best; but oh, how ill he is! If he were quite well, he would look something like you, Phil. [*She steps aside to look into the picture more carefully.*]

PHILIP.

[*Aside, with a sigh.*] Sometimes I think it is I indeed—the whole thing a terrible forecast! Does Fate beckon me, or is there a warning finger in this dream of captivity?

DOLLY.

[*Looking up.*] What did you say, Philip?

PHILIP.

The picture makes you sad?

DOLLY.

No; but I feel very, very sorry for the prisoner who is sick; and the woman wants to help him, doesn't she? I like her for that. Oh, I think it is a great work, Philip! Mr. Chetwynd thinks so.

MRS. MILBANKE.

[*Who has overheard last remark while making tea, and dismissing HENSHAW and handing cup to DICK.*] Then it must be good if Mr. Chetwynd thinks so and is willing to put his words into print.

CHETWYND.

What I think and what I print are quite different things, eh, Mrs. Milbanke? How well you know me! What a pleasant thing it is to have a character that every one can read like a book—to wear one's heart on one's sleeve, as Shakespeare says.

MRS. MILBANKE.

For daws to peck at. Then I'm a daw, Mr. Chet-

wynd! Thank you! You thought I did not know my Shakespeare. Dolly, I think we will go now I have made a point—scored off Mr. Chetwynd.

CHETWYND.

Therefore stay and give him his revenge.

DOLLY.

Jenny will not do that. Whenever she wins she leaves; except once—it was at Monte Carlo, where we met Mr. Swynford last year, you know, Philip. Sam said when you lose leave off, when you win go on, and Jenny won—oh, I don't know how much.

MRS. MILBANKE.

[*Patronisingly.*] You forget, Dolly dear, Mr. Forsyth has never been to Monte Carlo.

CHETWYND.

Really! I wonder what a man can possibly find to talk about who has not been to Monte Carlo.

MRS. MILBANKE.

Mr. Chetwynd, you have suddenly become disagreeable; what is the matter? I thought your Venetian letter in Monday's *Times* was very good; didn't your chief care for it?

CHETWYND.

I don't care for his opinion as long as I can please you.

Enter HENSHAW.

HENSHAW.

[*Announces.*] Mr. Sam Swynford.

Enter SWYNFORD.

PHILIP.

How do you do, Mr. Swynford? [*Shakes hands,*]
We were just speaking of you.

SAM.

Honoured, I'm sure !

MRS. MILBANKE.

Mr. Swynford can tell you all about Monte Carlo.
He knows how to break the bank.

SAM.

Knows how, but hates to worry the croupiers.
Mr. Chetwynd, I declare ! Come to do the *fêtes* ?

CHETWYND.

Yes, Mr. Swynford. [*To* MRS. MILBANKE.] You see, Mr. Swynford also knows my little game, as he would call it.

SAM.

Should think I do ; believe I've read every line you have written for years.

CHETWYND.

And yet I don't write about the money market. You are too polite, Mr. Swynford.

SAM.

Not a bit of it ; I like your style. It's got what the critics call distinction. As for the money market, any fool can write about that, and a good many fools do.

CHETWYND.

And how are things, Mr. Swynford ?

SAM.

Lovely, Mr. Chetwynd. Bought largely for a falling market, sold well for the rise. I'm what you newspaper men call an optimist—believe in the British flag and all that ; things have gone up to the very figure I hoped they'd touch.

CHETWYND.

Then you've made more money in a week than I shall earn in the next five years during which you will be reading me.

SAM.

Don't know your rates, Mr. Chetwynd, but I can put you on to a good thing if you like.

CHETWYND.

My dear friend, don't ; the last good thing nearly ruined me.

SAM.

Oh, I would take care of you ! [*Aside to DOLLY, who has come near him during the conversation.*] Dolly, I've bought that pearl necklace—got it in my pocket—told you I'd buy it if Union Pacifics and Egyptians went up.

DOLLY.

Oh, you shouldn't, Sam !

SAM.

And I want you to come and look at a diamond there is just off the square by that little street past St. Mark's.

DOLLY.

You are too kind, Sam ; I really cannot accept it. Did you say you had the pearls in your pocket ?

SAM.

Yes ; [*taking them out furtively*] there they are !

They've got a sheen, Dolly, that's as lovely—if I dare say so—as your eyes.

DOLLY.

I must not listen to you, Sam—certainly not here, under Mr. Forsyth's very roof.

SAM.

Oh, he's got a world of things to make his life happy; I have only you.

DOLLY.

Sam, how dare you! You haven't got me; if Jenny hears you say those things she will have a fit!

SAM.

[*Aside.*] Then she's likely to have several fits before the day's over! I am on the war-path.

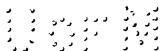
DOLLY.

Sam, what do you mean? Go away! Don't you see that Philip is watching us?

SAM.

No; better occupied, listening to Chetwynd's compliments—fine scheme of colour, artistic reticence, masterly treatment——

[MRS. MILBANKE *joins* DOLLY and SAM; *they talk in dumb show.*



CHETWYND.

[*To PHILIP.*] There is an incident much later than Madame Lapukin, Philip. A young girl was flogged at Czarovna by order of this very Petronovitch. She was betrothed to the rabbi, a young fellow of great learning from Moscow. They beat him to death in her presence and then, stripped to the waist, they gave her twenty blows of the knout. She bore it without a cry; I saw her carried dying to the hospital. She was said to be beautiful, but I only saw her a wild, frantic creature, haranguing the mob; her father was the richest Jew in the town; they called her "Queen of the Ghetto"; her name was Anna Klosstock.

Enter HENSHAW.

HENSHAW.

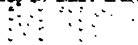
The Countess Stravensky and Colonel Maurice de Barsac.

PHILIP.

[*Aside.*] The woman of my dreams—the face at the Opera!

FERARI.

This is Mr. Philip Forsyth.



ANNA.

It is a pleasure to make your acquaintance.

PHILIP.

[*Very much absorbed.*] Thank you! [*Looking round—still bewildered.*] May I present to you Mrs. Milbanke?

[*MRS. MILBANKE bows.*

Miss Norcott.

DOLLY.

[*Bowing.*] I saw you landing from your gondola, Countess! What a crowd there was!

ANNA.

Yes; all Venice is out of doors to-day.

PHILIP.

[*SWYNFORD having pressed forward by DOLLY's side.*] Mr. Samuel Swynford.

[*SWYNFORD bows.*

And Mr. Richard Chetwynd, of London.

ANNA.

How do you do, sir? We have met before.

CHETWYND.

In Paris, I think.

ANNA.

At the Russian Embassy.

CHETWYND.

Yes!—[*Aside.*] By Jupiter, she is like the picture!

MRS. MILBANKE.

[*To PHILIP.*] Why don't you introduce us to the Colonel?

PHILIP.

Colonel Maurice de Barsac, Mrs. Milbanke.

[*FERARI bows.*]

Miss Norcott.

[*DOLLY bows.*]

Mr. Samuel Swynford.

[*SAM bows.*]

MRS. MILBANKE.

Are you making a long stay in Venice, Colonel?

FERARI.

No, madame; unfortunately.

[*They go aside and talk.*]

ANNA.

[*To PHILIP.*] This is the picture which has so much aroused the feelings of the Colonel?

PHILIP.

He was anxious you should see it.

[ANNA looks steadfastly at the picture.

DOLLY.

[To FERARI.] Oh, I love Venice; it is so *chic*!

FERARI.

Do you go to the Countess's ball on Monday?

MRS. MILBANKE.

The Countess Stravensky?

FERARI.

Yes; she receives the Princess Ipponova and her husband the Russian Ambassador, General Petronovitch.

DOLLY.

We have only just had the honour to meet the Countess, as you know, and, therefore, are not invited.

FERARI.

Believe me, the Countess will feel greatly the honour to have you come.

[They talk in dumb show.

ANNA.

And [*looking round at CHETWYND and PHILIP*]
Colonel de Barsac had the audacity to say this
woman is like me—

[*PHIL and CHETWYND look surprised.*
when I am angry.

[*CHETWYND smiles.*

PHILIP.

As if you could be angry !

ANNA.

Oh, I can ! But what else do you think my daring
secretary said ? That I ought to come to your assist-
ance.

PHILIP.

My assistance ?

ANNA.

The face of the woman is only sketched in ?

PHILIP.

That is all ; I rubbed out the original and painted
this from memory.

ANNA.

After thinking you had seen something like it at
the Opera ?

PHILIP.

Yes.

ANNA.

And you have been searching for your imaginary model ever since?

PHILIP.

Yes.

ANNA.

And what do you think of Colonel de Barsac's audacity when he says that I ought to compassionate your despair and sit to you—for that face?

PHILIP.

Countess!

CHETWYND.

The Colonel is a man of great discernment.

ANNA.

Do you think so?

CHETWYND.

I do, indeed.

ANNA.

Then you think this is something like me?

CHETWYND.

I thought so the moment you entered the room.

ANNA.

And do you think I could put so much despair and sorrow into my face ?

CHETWYND.

I should be grieved to think that you might ever have cause to do so.

ANNA.

But you, Mr. Forsyth, you do not speak ?

PHILIP.

I am too overjoyed to think that the Colonel has made it possible for me to beg that you will give me a sitting. At least there is one side of that woman's character in your face.

ANNA.

Yes ?

PHILIP.

The womanly, the true, the pure, the angelic !

ANNA.

Ah ! when you do find your tongue, Mr. Forsyth, you know how to flatter ! But you forget that your

picture is hardly one that should appeal to me—politically, at least; though, as the Colonel says, art is above politics, and one may sympathise with suffering whether it is deserved or not. Mr. Forsyth, if you think I can assist your great work, command me.

[FERARI goes over to ANNA, DICK, and PHILIP.]

MRS. MILBANKE.

[To DOLLY.] I think Forsyth has gone quite mad over this woman; depend upon it, this is not their first meeting. Did you see that look he gave her? [To SAM.] Sam, take Dolly home! [Aside to SAM.] And I will now back your suit.

SAM.

Oh, my dear Mrs. Milbanke!

MRS. MILBANKE.

I will make Chetwynd bring me. [Goes to PHILIP and the rest.] Good-bye, Mr. Forsyth!

[Bows to ANNA, who smiles graciously and bows in return.]

Mr. Chetwynd, I will thank you to give me your arm.

CHETWYND.

With pleasure!

MRS. MILBANKE.

Take me home.

CHETWYND.

Certainly. [*Bows to* COUNTESS.] Good-morning, Countess.

ANNA.

Good-day, sir.

DOLLY.

Good-bye, Philip.

PHILIP.

Oh, good-bye, Miss Norcott.

SAM.

[*Aside.*] That's all right! *Miss Norcott*, not Dolly.

DOLLY.

I wish you good-day, Countess Stravensky.

ANNA.

Good-day, my dear! [*Puts out her hand—DOLLY shakes it.*]

[*SAM bows in a general way to company.*]

DOLLY.

I declare I think she is charming.

ANNA.

[To PHILIP.] A very sweet girl Miss Norcott ; quite an English type : and what complexions your English girls have !

PHILIP.

Yes.

ANNA.

And when shall this sitting take place ?

FERARI.

Now ; a gracious action is a doubled courtesy when it is done quickly.

ANNA.

Have I sufficient leisure ?

FERARI.

The only time at your disposal this week.

ANNA.

Then be it so, Mr. Forsyth.

PHILIP.

Oh, thank you ; you are too good ! Excuse me one moment. I will give my man some necessary instructions.

[*Exit.*

FERARI.

He is ours !

ANNA.

I will not have it so.

FERARI.

What, in these few minutes has he stirred your heart for the first time since Losinski ?

ANNA.

He has the same far-seeing eyes, the same enthusiasm of youth, the same——

FERARI.

[*Interrupting.*] The same hatred of the Russian, the same desire to emancipate our fallen race !

ANNA.

I pity him ; don't tempt his generous nature ; it would defeat him in his first action ; there is only one man in all the world who has your resource—your——

FERARI.

Devotion to the cause and good fortune to have so able, so lovely, so true a lieutenant. Ask my life, Anna, it is yours; ask me to neglect the smallest opportunity for the cause and I am adamant; Forsyth is the man of men I want. It is as if the great Jehovah had directed our steps hither to find him; he will cover our advance on St. Petersburg. I remind you of your oath, and when this sitting is over I have news for you—news of your father.

ANNA.

[*Eagerly.*] The news we hoped for?

FERARI.

All that we have hoped for is coming to pass; but Losinski is still unavenged.

Enter PHILIP with easel, speaking to HENSHAW.

PHILIP.

I am not to be disturbed under any circumstances.

FERARI.

Au revoir, Mr. Forsyth; I leave you with your model.

[*Exit.*

PHILIP.

Will you kindly take this seat, Countess ?—*[Aside.]*
How my heart beats !

*[He places chair for her on platform ; she lays
aside pelisse and hat. PHILIP arranges easel
with blank canvas.]*

ANNA.

[Seats herself.] Mr. Forsyth, I knew the prototype of your martyr. She was of the unhappy race of Israel, and they called her Queen of the Ghetto in the Russian village where she lived in innocence and peace. On the day of her betrothal she fell a victim to the lust and tyranny of the Russian Governor, saw her lover beaten to death, and was herself flogged in the public square, her father dragged to prison broken-hearted. *[Rises.]* Paint your picture, but give it a companion—the gallows and the whipping-block, with a woman under the knout by the side of her dead lover ; the scene the market-place of her native village ; her crime that she had dared to denounce the Russian Governor who had ruined her life, murdered her betrothed, and condemned her father to Siberia ! Let the gay world see what it is to be a Jew in Russia ; hang up the truth on the walls of your great Academy, and I, the most wretched, the most

miserable of her sex, will be the model for your virgin martyr ! [*Leans against chair struggling with her emotion.*]

PHILIP.

My God, how you must have suffered !

ANNA.

[*With passion and dignity.*] And I will also stand for your spirit of Vengeance !

END OF ACT III.



Act IV

SCENE.—*A room in the Fazzio Palace, Venice, where the Countess is residing. Handsomely but simply furnished; frescoed work, bold historic scenes. Luxurious seat or divan, rugs on floor, a rich cabinet; some palms. The gateway in C. opens on stairway down to exit on canal. Entrances L. U. C. and R.*

[COUNTRESS, DOLLY, MRS. MILBANKE, PHILIP, and CHETWYND discovered. *The guests are bidding COUNTRESS good-night. The men are in evening dress. Two liveried attendants stand on each side of entrance. The moon is shining. A company of minstrels are singing "Funiculi."*

SWYNFORD.

Quite cockney guests, Countess; the first to come, the last to go.

DOLLY.

Sam!

SWYNFORD.

A most delightful evening, Countess; we hardly know how to thank you.

COUNTESS.

The pleasure has been mine.

DOLLY.

And what a lovely night! And how beautifully they sing in that galagenti—as full of joy as a skylark on a spring morning.

COUNTESS.

I don't know your skylark, my dear. Music is sad or joyful as the heart makes it. Everything is beautiful in Venice.

PHILIP.

[*Who is standing apart, watching COUNTESS, and speaking aside to himself.*] And you above all! The music makes my heart ache.

[*A soloist is singing verse of "Funiculi," followed by chorus.*]

SWYNFORD.

It is lovely; the boat is by the palace steps. [*Takes*

DOLLY'S arm in his, and draws her to the open gateway.]

[MRS. MILBANKE and CHETWYND are talking together on seat, leaving centre of stage to PHILIP and COUNTESS. PHILIP moves towards her.]

COUNTESS.

[To PHILIP.] Your pretty countrywoman thinks the minstrels' song joyous; and so it is to hearts that beat responsively.

With laugh, and dance, and song, the day soon passes,
Full soon is gone.

And so you have given her up?

PHILIP.

Mr. Swynford was always her favourite—and as for me——

COUNTESS.

Hush! You are not to tell me any more until to-morrow. Listen to the song:

Hark! The soft guitar!
Funiculi! Funicula!

PHILIP.

You affect a joy you do not feel.

COUNTESS.

No, dear heart, I am madly happy to-night. There is a joy that stings; one waits for it years and years; and it may be hate, not love.

PHILIP.

You do not give me your confidence, and you will not accept mine.

COUNTESS.

I said to-morrow; let the world stand still betwixt you and me till to-morrow.

PHILIP.

It is a lifetime until then.

COUNTESS.

For your sake would to God it were!

PHILIP.

Why do you say that? My sake counts nothing outside your life and happiness.

COUNTESS.

You are very rash.

PHILIP.

Is it rash to love you? Is it rash to hope?

COUNTESS.

There is hope in the song ; let it be your lullaby until to-morrow. Hush ! your friends wish to say good-night.

PHILIP.

And I am dying to say good-morrow.

[CHETWYND and MRS. MILBANKE have risen ;
CHETWYND takes up light cloak and places it
round her shoulders.

CHETWYND.

No, it is not cold ; but the cloak becomes you. And here are our gondoliers. I hear them at the quay.

MRS. MILBANKE.

What a beautiful moon !

CHETWYND.

Nowhere so beautiful as at Venice—and I have seen her soft sweet majesty in almost every land and on almost every sea.

MRS. MILBANKE.

What a traveller you have been !

CHETWYND.

But there is another moon I know nothing of, Mrs.

Milbanke—Jenny—I must call you Jenny, if you snub me for it.

MRS. MILBANKE.

If I had ever snubbed you in earnest you wouldn't dare to call me Jenny now, nor should I call you Dick.

CHETWYND.

My darling! That other moon is not made of green cheese; it is called the honeymoon—where shall we spend it?

MRS. MILBANKE.

This is my first visit to Venice.

CHETWYND.

Then we'll celebrate our happiness on a second trip, eh? May I say *our* happiness?

MRS. MILBANKE.

Is that your subtle way of asking if I love you Is anybody looking?

CHETWYND.

No; they are all engaged, like ourselves.

MRS. MILBANKE.

Kiss me, Dick.

[CHETWYND *embraces her*.

SWYNFORD.

Here's our gondola. Come, Dolly !

DOLLY.

Good-night again, dear Countess.

COUNTESS.

[*Turning to her.*] Good-night, sweetheart. Think of me in your happiest remembrances of Venice.

DOLLY.

Indeed I will ; I have no happier remembrances. Good-night.

[COUNTESS *kisses her*.

[*Exit, down steps, DOLLY and SWYNFORD.*

CHETWYND.

[*Coming forward with MRS. MILBANKE.*] And here is our fairy boat, with a fairy lamp in the prow [*looking down on canal from gates*] in honour of its goddess. [*To COUNTESS.*] Good-night, most kind hostess.

COUNTESS.

Good-night, most gallant guest. [*He kisses her hand.*]

MRS. MILBANKE.

Good-night, Countess. I hope you will honour my poor receptions when you come to town.

COUNTESS.

[*Shaking hands.*] Thank you very much.

CHETWYND.

You came with us, Philip.

PHILIP.

Two's company. I will follow you.

COUNTESS.

No, indeed you will not, Monsieur Misanthrope. You will go with your friends.—[*Aside.*] Go, if you love me! Come to me to-morrow, early. [PHILIP bends over her hand, kisses it.] Good-night, then.

[*Exit, all but* COUNTESS.

[*To* SERVANTS.] See to the fastenings of the lower gates.

[*Servants make silent gestures of assent, and exit after the guests.*

[*Looking off, as music of "Funiculi," which had*

died away, is now heard again.] A fitting song for such a night !

With laugh, and dance, and song, the day soon passes,
Full soon is gone.

For mirth was made for joyous lads and lasses
To call their own.

Listen! Hark! The soft guitar!
Funiculi! Funicula!

[*Going towards exit L.*] Poor Philip! To-morrow he shall know all. How he will hate me! [*At door of exit.*] To-night retribution, justice! To-morrow! Ah, God! There is no to-morrow for Anna Klosstock.

[*Exit.*

[*The music of "Funiculi" chorus swells out and ceases.*

Enter R., by arch-like doorway, PETROSKI and BEPPO, gondoliers. They close gate on COUNTESS, and cover with shutters, which they fasten with bar.

PETROSKI.

[*Goes to doors R. and L., opens and closes cautiously, looks round room.*] It is time Signor Ferari arrived.

BEPPO.

[*Looks at watch.*] Not quite. [*Sits.*]

PETROSKI.

[*Sits cross-legged on chair opposite BEPPO.*] You like to be back again in Venice?

BEPPO.

It is the only city, and I was born here.

PETROSKI.

One more excursion to St Petersburg and your service will be finished; then you can come home for good.

BEPPO.

If I am not here for good already.

PETROSKI.

You don't think the business of to-night will be successful?

BEPPO.

I doubt!

PETROSKI.

After the business of to-night, all Europe will acknowledge the power of the Brotherhood; it only needs the victory to follow in St. Petersburg to make a breach in the walls of Tyranny big enough for the army of Freedom to march through.

BEPPO.

And be captured to a man.

PETROSKI.

Ah, you don't know the resources of our Countess.

BEPPO.

Speak lower ! I worship our leader, that is why I fear.

PETROSKI.

I worship our great cause only, and that is why I neither doubt nor fear.

Enter FERARI from R. He is dressed as in First Act, representing his own person, FERARI the Jew.

FERARI.

[*Addressing BEPPO.*] General Petronovitch awaits you by the Church of Saint Maria Formosa ; raise your right hand as you approach ; he will acknowledge the signal by descending the steps ; it is the wish of the Countess that he should come here *incognito* : he will wear a grey cloak over an undress uniform. Bring him to the private landing by the

western corridor [*Pointing*—the way you came. Use your own gondola, Beppo, not the Countess's.

[*BEPPo and PETROSKI bow and retire R.*

FERARI closes the door after them and draws portière over it. FERARI then rings gong on table twice.

Enter OLGA MARASOFF, middle-aged woman, severe in dress and manner.

Where is Ivan ?

OLGA.

My husband is on guard at the water-gate.

FERARI.

The gate is locked ?

OLGA.

As you ordered, since seven.

FERARI.

Ivan stands within unseen ?

OLGA.

Yes.

FERARI.

Have you heard of your sister lately ?

OLGA.

They have starved her to death in the prison of St. Paul.

FERARI.

She is dead?

OLGA.

Yes.

FERARI.

You lost your father in the massacre of Czarovna?

OLGA.

You know it.

FERARI.

Olga Marasoff, within an hour you will be avenged; before the year is out, Ivan shall help to dictate terms of peace to the Czar himself, in his own palace—or——

OLGA.

I know the rest; what would you now?

FERARI.

Tell the Countess I am here, and keep the outer corridor barred until she returns to her chamber to dress.

[*Exit* OLGA.]

It is good to probe the old wounds when vengeance is afoot. You were right, dear dead Count Stravensky, when you told the butcher of Czarovna he would live to regret. Stravensky was a good judge of women, when he selected Anna to be his instrument. What a history! From the scaffold, mutilated, dying, to the wedding at that bedside in Paris, and the dying words, "Under the shelter of my name, use my wealth in the cause of the Brotherhood and the God of Mercy and Justice, and the angel of patriotism be with you."

Enter ANNA in rich tea-gown.

COUNTESS.

Talking to yourself, Andrea Ferari, for lack of company, eh?

FERARI.

I had the company of many thoughts.

COUNTESS.

Yes? You sent for me.

FERARI.

Only to say that the great General Petronovitch, Ambassador to Italy, is on his way to meet the Countess Stravensky.

COUNTESS.

She is prepared to receive him.

FERARI.

She remembers how he received her? How after beating to death her betrothed, he handed her over to the executioner?

COUNTESS.

I am not likely to forget; I remembered it at the Queen's ball last night. When he pressed my hand in the dance, I gave him the assignation he sought for.

FERARI.

He is true to his first love, though he has long since forgotten Anna Klosstock.

COUNTESS.

In Heaven's name do not degrade the sweet word "love" with the awful memories you seem anxious to recall.

FERARI.

I desire to recall all that is bitter in your memory, Anna—your love, your betrothal, your exiled father, your degradation; in spite of which I could stoop and kiss the hem of your garment; to me you are an

angel, and if I were not old enough to be your father, or if I had been made for what women call love, I would have sought from you the diviner right of authority over you than that which belongs to me as commander of the Brotherhood.

COUNTESS.

My dear friend, let us leave sentiment for a more fitting time: our hands are joined in work that must ever divide our hearts. What time is it?

FERARI.

A few minutes to the time when your guest should arrive.

COUNTESS.

Leave me, Ferari; have no fear that I will not play my part in the act of justice to which we are called.

FERARI.

My post is here [*pointing to door*]. The signal is with me.

[*Exit L.*]

COUNTESS.

Now, all ye ministers of hell, that lent your aid to the butcher of Czarovna, aid me now. Help me with your devilish arts, make me cruel as the knout, let

my words bite into his soul; and, O dread Fate, that gives him to my power, let me pronounce his doom and fear not. [*She reclines upon an ample handsome divan. Fans herself with large feather fan.*]

Enter L. BEPPO and PETROSKI. They stand one each side of the door, and bow as PETRONOVITCH, wrapped in grey cloak, enters. Then they both retire, closing door. ANNA rises from couch.

Draw the portière, dear General.

[*PETRONOVITCH draws portière, and ANNA goes up to door R., and draws portière over that.*

I desire to maintain your incognito, General.

PETRONOVITCH.

My most kind and sweet Countess, you are discretion itself, and your gondoliers might be trained agents of the Russian police; I have not even heard the sound of their voices.

COUNTESS.

Nay, rather say I am very weak, General, but even woman's strength is weakness.

PETRONOVITCH.

Her strength lies in her generosity. [*Raises her hand to his lips.*]

COUNTESS.

And man's strength ?

PETRONOVITCH.

Is in his appreciation. [*Lays aside his cloak and sword.*]

COUNTESS.

You have made these affairs of the heart a study ?

PETRONOVITCH.

What else in life is worth serious attention ?

COUNTESS.

Oh, there are other matters of moment ; you must have felt them in the exercise of your noble profession many a time.

PETRONOVITCH.

Never as keenly as the natural interest a man feels in a beautiful woman, especially when she grants him the delicious privilege you have granted me. [*He sits by her side, and steals arm about her, which she gently resists.*]

COUNTESS.

But you are a great general, sir ; you must in your time have taken part in many heroic scenes ; your

victory over the Kurds, for instance, was magnificent.

PETRONOVITCH.

I prefer my victory of to-night.

COUNTESS.

Your triumphant march through Central Asia is historic.

PETRONOVITCH.

My meeting with the Countess Stravensky at Venice will be longer remembered.

COUNTESS.

Tell me, General, what was your first great achievement in the service of our good father the Czar ?

PETRONOVITCH.

Great achievements, my dear Countess, become small when the victor talks of them. [*His arm now around her.*]

COUNTESS.

But a woman loves to hear her hero recount his victories. Don't you remember that it was with the eloquent tongue of the soldier that Othello won Desdemona : and it was here, on one of these balconies,

that the Moorish commander came and held friendly and romantic converse with the maiden and her father ?

PETRONOVITCH.

And it was here, also, I presume, where she fell a victim to the black man's jealousy. If I had been Othello—for your sake I would even have been black—and you had been Desdemona, I should have understood you better, should have loved and trusted you. I would never have been jealous ; I would never have killed you, except with kindness ; and then we would have crossed the dark river together !

COUNTESS.

My dear General, [*turning her eyes full upon him*] if all this be true, you are indeed in love.

PETRONOVITCH.

I am, indeed, most truly, most devotedly.

COUNTESS.

[*Her head upon his shoulder.*] He didn't like the parting with his daughter, that old Venetian. I had a father once—have now, somewhere in the world ; and I would give my life to embrace him once again !

PETRONOVITCH.

You are in a very reflective mood.

COUNTESS.

Yes, the mood comes with thinking of your victories and the shadows that follow their sunshine. You triumphed once, did you not, most completely and with great honour in suppressing the rising against the Jews, in the province of Vilnavitch? Ah, that was kind of you, to protect with your strong Russian hand those poor Hebrew people! You know, of course, that I am a Jewess?

PETRONOVITCH.

No other race could give to the world so beautiful a creature.

COUNTESS.

It is the nature of love to flatter, and you do not care to talk of your generous deeds. Our Russian fellow subjects had a fit of madness, had they not, in those days against my people? At a place called Czarovna, if I remember the name rightly, they had made for themselves, as far as possible in Russia, what may be called a paradise. It was as if their Father Abraham had brought them at last to something like a land flowing with milk and honey.

PETRONOVITCH.

Yes, I believe so. [*Absorbed in his admiration of the COUNTESS, whom he presses closer to his side.*]

COUNTESS.

You helped the poor people, and put down the insurrection—is it not so?

PETRONOVITCH.

Well, not quite that, I fear. I was the Czar's officer; I tried to do my duty.

COUNTESS.

Yes, you would, dear General, and in so doing show your appreciation of the fine character and domestic instincts of the Czarovna Jew—I am sure you did. It was like you, like Russia, like our Holy Father the Czar! Do you remember the name of Klosstock? My dear dead Count Stravensky mentioned him to me as a very worthy man: I think he had some business dealings with him.

PETRONOVITCH.

No, I don't remember [*a little out of patience with the direction in which the COUNTESS forces the conversation*—it is so long ago, and so many events have happened since.

COUNTESS.

You do not care to talk of these things ; I am very sorry. [*She draws herself from him, and no longer responds to his embraces.*]

PETRONOVITCH.

My dear Countess, I care to talk of anything that may interest you. Believe me, I have no other desire than to be your slave.

COUNTESS.

There was a young woman in Czarovna—I think it must be talking of Desdemona and her father that has made me recall some strange circumstances which came to the knowledge of my dear dead husband, Count Stravensky—they called her “Queen of the Ghetto,” do you remember?

PETRONOVITCH.

Yes, I think I do ; but, as I said before, it is so long ago, and so many things have happened in the time that has passed between then and now.

COUNTESS.

Oh, no, it is not so long ago, my dear General—not

to her, at least, nor to her father, nor to the rabbi to whom she was betrothed ! To her [*rising and putting aside his arm*] it is as yesterday. To her the agony is as keen this moment as it was then. [*She faces him calmly, but with flashing eyes as he rises to his feet ; her hand is busy with a diamond buckle at her throat.*] Do you remember how you kept your promise to that woman ? Do you remember the base proposals she resented ? Do you remember how you undertook to release her lover ? Do you remember how you outraged your promised protection—how you slew her lover, and left the cruel marks of your savage nature upon her, body and soul ? You do—I see you do !

[*PETRONOVITCH turns pale as she speaks, steps back from her as if to receive the spring of some wild animal. Unclasping the diamond buckle, she flings aside her robe and discloses the peasant costume of Czarovna, and stands before him his victim, ANNA KLOSSTOCK.*

FERARI comes from L., and takes up PETRONOVITCH'S sword and belt ; PETROSKI and BEPPO from R., in quiet, orderly fashion. BEPPO and PETROSKI are both armed. They take up positions as guards.

COUNTESS.

You are the prisoner of the Brotherhood. My mission is not one of revenge, but justice. You pronounced the judgment upon the Rabbi Losinski ; you pronounced the judgment upon Nathan Klosstock, my dear father ; first ruining your victim beyond repair, you pronounced the judgment upon Anna Klosstock. You thought her dead. She lives to pronounce the judgment upon you, not in her own name, but in the name of Liberty. It is death !

PETRONOVITCH.

Give me my sword and the rights of a soldier.

FERARI.

You shall be honourably dispatched, but surely your hour has come.

PETRONOVITCH.

What would you do ?

FERARI.

Remove you hence to the place of execution, and after your death, make your body free of the Adriatic—a merciful ending compared with the knout and a

grave of quick-lime to which you condemned the Rabbi Losinski.

[PETRONOVITCH *moves as if to resist or raise an alarm; upon which BEPPO and PETROSKI cover him with revolvers.*

Resist until we give you the right to fight for your life, and you die where you stand. Call for assistance and your voice will be heard no more beyond these walls than the cries of your victims of Czarovna were heard against the beat of your merciless drums.

PETRONOVITCH.

Russia will know how to avenge me.

COUNTESS.

Russia has a long and cruel arm, but the victory is not always to the strong.

PETRONOVITCH.

[*Viciously.*] Yet I recall a lover's victory which Anna Klosstock still remembers. [*Scoffingly.*] 'Twas a bridal your Losinski never dreamt of.

[ANNA *covers her face with her hands.*

FERARI.

[*Who stands with hand on his knife as ANNA*

covers her face, now draws it and falls upon PETRONOVITCH.] Ruffian, die with that foul taunt upon your lips! [*Stabs him.*]

[*PETRONOVITCH falls into the arms of BEPPO and PETROSKI, who fling him dead upon the floor.*]

END OF ACT IV

*During part of closing scene distant music of
"Funiculi" heard.*

Act V .

SCENE I.—*The Siberian Frontier. On cloth, in distance, the Frontier Pillar, which is a prominent feature of next scene. In wing, easily moved (drawn off for change) tail of tarantas—a Russian carriage—and close by (also placed to be easily drawn off) a wood fire in brazier, with samavor (urn and tea-kettle) steaming.*

FERARI as Russian General, undress uniform, with large cloak. He is sitting on log, smoking and drinking tea. By his side Russian courier, his servant OSSIP.

FERARI.

Well, Ossip, who is the fellow ?

OSSIP.

It is the Englishman we passed on the road, Excellency.

FERARI.

I thought so. The fellow whose carriage broke down ?

OSSIP.

Yes, Excellency.

FERARI.

Is he coming this way?

OSSIP.

Yes, Excellency.

FERARI.

Thought he'd be too impatient to wait until they patched up the broken wheel. Go, Ossip, and find out what section of the exile gang is expected first at the frontier.

OSSIP.

Yes, Excellency.

[*Exit* OSSIP.]

FERARI.

M. Chetwynd won't know me, of course. Hardly know myself sometimes.

Enter DICK CHETWYND.

Good-day to you, sir.

CHETWYND.

And to you, Colonel. By the way, are you the

polite gentleman who saw my wretched carriage break down, and would not come to my assistance ?

FERARI.

I pride myself on my politeness, sir ; but I am not a colonel, M. Chetwynd.

CHETWYND.

Is it because you know me, Lieutenant, that you lay aside the politeness upon which you pride yourself, and treat me with incivility ?

FERARI.

There was a freight bivouac close by and another disabled carriage besides your own, and it might not have been well for any one to have witnessed our meeting. Even a Russian general must be circumspect, if he would retain the confidence of his Imperial Majesty. You had an old man with you ?

CHETWYND.

Picked him up an hour or two ago ; he has gone forward on foot.

FERARI.

His destination ?

CHETWYND.

The Frontier Pillar.

FERARI.

You are alone ?

CHETWYND.

Yes. Any other questions ?

FERARI.

One other. [*Rising.*] Don't you know me ?
[*Flinging cloak aside.*]

CHETWYND.

By Jove, yes ! De Barsac !

FERARI.

[*Bows.*] At your service, monsieur. I followed you from St. Petersburg to Moscow, from Moscow to Nijni Novgorod, thence down the Volga, then by the Ural Mountains railway, and hither by waggon. What a journey ! [*Sits.*]

CHETWYND.

And your object ?

FERARI.

Similar to your own.

CHETWYND.

I am here to rescue Philip Forsyth, who is *en route*

for the salt-mines of Siberia. You remember the young artist ?

FERARI.

Perfectly. My mission is to—*[hesitates]*—have a cup of tea ?

CHETWYND.

Thank you.

FERARI.

[Offering silver case.] Cigarette ?

CHETWYND.

Thank you. *[Takes cigarette.]*

FERARI.

[Pouring out tea.] Your genuine Muscovite is not content with a slice of lemon in his tea—*[pours from flask]*—he takes a little brandy.

CHETWYND.

[Taking tea from FERARI.] Your genuine Muscovite is wise ; his tea is better than his vodka.

FERARI.

If it is not an impertinence, may I ask if Madame Milbanke is still the charming widow ?

CHETWYND.

Madame Milbanke is still charming, though she is no longer a widow. I shall do myself the pleasure of saying that you inquired after her. She came with me to St. Petersburg.

FERARI.

And M. Swynford and Mademoiselle Dolly?

CHETWYND.

They travelled with us ; almost a honeymoon trip, I may say.

FERARI.

That is good ; I congratulate you, monsieur.

CHETWYND.

And the General de——

FERARI.

Barsac, monsieur.

CHETWYND.

Is the General still anything more to the Countess Stravensky than simply her Secretary ?

FERARI.

Nothing more.

CHETWYND.

And her ladyship ?

FERARI.

Is travelling under another name.

CHETWYND.

And who is the new lord and master ?

FERARI.

You don't understand, then, who Anna Klosstock is ?

CHETWYND.

Only that she was one of the prisoners taken with my misguided friend, Philip Forsyth.

FERARI.

You gave me in Venice your word of honour to respect my confidence.

CHETWYND.

Do you remind me of it to question my good faith ?

FERARI.

No ; to tax it further.

CHETWYND.

Your trust is sacred.

FERARI.

When the Countess Stravensky left Venice, it was to carry out a great enterprise in St. Petersburg, an operation [*lowers voice*] that might have transformed Russia and been a blessing to every Jew in Christendom.

CHETWYND.

[*Looking round.*] Then she was not Orthodox?

FERARI.

Don't fear; my man, Ossip, is on guard, and not a soul hereabout understands English, even if they could overhear us. Madame was not all you thought her—nor I, monsieur. Well, the enterprise failed; the police were ahead of us. The Countess Stravensky entered Russia with her faithful steward and secretary—myself; but for the operation in question she resumed the garb of her youth, and the name of her whom you saw flogged at Czarovna, Anna Klosstock.

CHETWYND.

By God! Is that so? Then Anna Klosstock is the Countess Stravensky?

FERARI.

To you and me, but Anna Klosstock only to the Russian police. It was a wilful, womanish thing to lay aside her rank and title and risk all as Klosstock's daughter; but she was never the same clear-headed business-like woman after she met your friend, Philip Forsyth. She was arrested, with Forsyth, Petroski, Beppo, and six others—a terrible blow to the Brotherhood. Detailed for other work, I remained at my hotel as Colonel Maurice de Barsac, the secretary and man of business of the Countess, supposed to be travelling in Europe. I was legally endowed with all her powers and authority. As her sole representative, and with ample means, I won my way to favour—became an honorary officer of the Guard. Where I could not coax assistance, I bought it, and have wielded the Stravensky power ostensibly for the Countess, but in truth for Anna Klosstock and for her father. It has been a delicate and difficult business, but the Stravensky wealth is great. It was not my cue to say a word for the young enthusiast, Forsyth, having learnt that powerful English influence was being exercised in his favour. After to-day, I shall begin to work for Beppo, and Petroski, and the rest—one by one I shall win them back, if not to duty, at least to home and

family ; they have served their term to patriotism. Happily, the police had no idea of the importance of the conspiracy ; but they knew enough to give ample excuse for adding to the exiled population of Siberia.

CHETWYND.

And who are you, then, after all ? Was De Barsac a disguise ?

FERARI.

[*Rising, and imitating old man.*] Do you remember old Grunstein the banker ? That was a disguise.

CHETWYND.

The old Jew who got off my dispatches to London ?

FERARI.

The same.

CHETWYND.

By Jupiter, you deserve your successes, whatever they are !

FERARI.

It was the same old Jew who the next day got the right to visit the hospital whither they had carried Anna Klosstock, all but dead of the knout ; the same old Jew who, six months later, had her officially killed and officially buried—skill, audacity, and roubles will

do anything in Russia. I carried off the prisoner under another name, and delivered her to the charge of the Count Stravensky in Paris. Time, good doctors, kindness, and a superb physique did the rest. Two years ago, on his death-bed, the Count married Anna Klosstock, endowing her with his enormous wealth and his patriotic mission.

CHETWYND.

And the young woman whom I saw flogged at Czarovna——?

FERARI.

Was the Countess who sat to your friend, the young artist in Venice.

CHETWYND.

Great heavens! Then the cruel Governor Petronovitch——?

FERARI.

Was executed at Venice, by a commander of the Brotherhood known as Ferari the Jew! The Brotherhood has its reverses, but it has its triumphs also. Let me not boast, however, in presence of that silent landmark [*pointing to pillar*] consecrated to blighted hopes and broken hearts. No other boundary post in all the world's history has witnessed so

much human suffering. Since the century began more than half a million exiles have said good-bye to their native land in presence of the Pillar of Tears.

[*Peasants, men and women, cross stage at back, some with baskets.*]

CHETWYND.

And the people now passing ?

FERARI.

They are peasants and others, who have walked or ridden miles to cheer their good-byes with gifts, and food, and kindly words.

Enter KLOSSTOCK, his beard white, gaberdine dress.

CHETWYND.

Ah, my friend, you have come ! [*To FERARI.*] This is the fellow-traveller you spoke of ; joined us an hour or two ago.

FERARI.

[*Aside.*] Klosstock ! Sooner than I hoped.

CHETWYND.

[*Continuing.*] He has been liberated, and comes to find his daughter ; an example of Russian clemency.

FERARI.

Clemency ! Yes.

KLOSSTOCK.

I am content, if only once more I can hold her hand in mine.

FERARI.

[*Taking him aside, while CHETWYND sits and smokes.*]
Old man, do you remember one Ferari—Andrea Ferari.

KLOSSTOCK.

God forgive him—yes !

FERARI.

Do you forgive him ?

KLOSSTOCK.

With all that is left of my broken heart.

FERARI.

He has devoted every moment of his life, since you were parted, to Anna's service.

KLOSSTOCK.

God bless him !

FERARI.

God has been good to him.

KLOSSTOCK.

Praise His holy Name !

FERARI.

Do you know what happened after your arrest at Czarovna ?

KLOSSTOCK.

No.

FERARI.

[*Aside.*] Thank God for that !

KLOSSTOCK.

Only that I never saw her again,—neither her, nor the rabbi, nor Moses Grunstein, nor any friend or neighbour.

FERARI.

You have forgotten me ?

KLOSSTOCK.

I have forgotten everything, but the face of my dear Anna.

FERARI.

[*In whisper.*] I am Ferari !

KLOSSTOCK.

{*Looks at him.*} You ?

[*Distant chant heard—a wild kind of vocal march.* FERARI and KLOSSTOCK listen ;
CHETWYND joins them.

[*Raising his hands.*] Moses and the Prophets ! It is the Song of the Children of Israel !

FERARI.

[*Removing his cap.*] The cry of the captives to the Lord of Hosts !

Enter OSSIP.

OSSIP.

[*Addressing FERARI.*] Excellency, it is the Jewish contingent from Moscow.

FERARI.

Forward, then, to meet them. [*To KLOSSTOCK.*]
Thy daughter Anna is with them.

KLOSSTOCK.

[*With much emotion.*] Sustain me, O Lord, in my joy, as Thou hast preserved me in mine adversity !

[*Exit.*

END OF SCENE.

SCENE II.—*The Siberian Boundary Post. On backcloth forest trees, brown leaves of late autumn, some trees nearly bare. Sunset. Waggon at back and in wings, about which are a number of men and women singing an old Israelitish hymn.*

WOMAN.

Good-bye, father, mother ! Oh, good-bye ! [*Kisses Post, and falls by its side.*]

A MAN.

Farewell, friends, home, life ! Farewell !

[*Other groups coming on with food and gifts.*

Near a waggon at back, fire and urns ; peasants making tea ; prisoners receiving it ; most of them hampered in their movements by chains. Cossack and other guards on duty. A pathetic scene, but made picturesque, and with touches of cheerfulness in it. Also snatches of singing off and on.

In foreground, group of men, BEPPO and PETROSKI prominent. Some reclining ; BEPPO and PETROSKI on logs or baggage. BEPPO and one or two others smoking.

BEPPO.

Happiness and misery's only a question of degree ;

it's heaven after hell to be allowed a good rest and a drink, and to have a talk.

PETROSKI.

Yes, and a smoke; they sweeten the Boundary Pillar to that extent, anyhow. He's a good deal of a brute, this commander Karazoff; but rations with wine and tobacco's a luxury that makes up for a few prods by the way.

[MAN *serves refreshments; peasants, too, are going among prisoners, watchfully surveyed by Cossack and other guards.*

BEPPPO.

[*Drinking.*] Your health, dear Countess; it's your sweet influence that gives us this, I'll be sworn.

PETROSKI.

A wonderful woman! God bless her!

BEPPPO.

[*In lower voice.*] Just like a woman to put on her maiden dress and assume her maiden name when the hour for vengeance had come.

PETROSKI.

And like our shrewd Ferari to use the other in her behalf and ours.

BEPPO.

A mistake, for all that. Something to do with sentiment ; sentiment's no good in our work ; better if she'd never met the Englishman ; good fellow, plucky too, but no good to us.

PETROSKI.

As it turned out. Where is he, by the way ?

PHILIP.

[*Coming on slowly towards them.*] You are looking for some one ?

PETROSKI.

Oh, there you are ; we'd lost you. Come and drink.

PHILIP.

No, thank you. Has any one seen her yet ?

BEPPO.

Anna Klosstock ? No ; but the women have not all arrived yet. [*Chant heard off.*] Poor souls, they sing !

PHILIP.

So did the martyrs at the stake.

BEPP0.

How do you know that Anna is to be among them ?

PHILIP.

I don't know ; but I hope—I hope.

PETROSKI.

Hope's a good prop until it drops you, and then it's the very devil.

[This group is sufficiently down the stage to allow for ANNA KLOSSTOCK's entrance.]

Enter ANNA KLOSSTOCK.

PHILIP.

Anna ! *[Seizes both her hands, and kisses them passionately.]*

ANNA.

Philip !

PHILIP.

Fate is kind once more.

ANNA.

Is it kind to bring us together again, when we had parted, as it seemed, for ever ?

PHILIP.

Did you think we had parted for ever ?

ANNA.

Yes.

PHILIP.

Did you hope so ?

ANNA.

I think I did.

PHILIP.

My God ! It was only the hope of our meeting again that kept me from madness, from despair, from death ! Anna, [*kisses her hand*] fate may only give us a few passing moments at this resting-place, but there is time. You said I should change. If I have, adversity only makes me love you more. It is ages since they parted us.

ANNA.

God help you, and forgive me ! I have been your bitterest enemy ; but oh ! I did not mean to be—I did not mean it ! Yet you owe all your miseries to me.

PHILIP.

And all my happiness. Before I knew you on that blessed day in Venice, my heart had sought you and was darkened with your shadow, to be lifted into sunshine by your presence. Anna, my love, my friend—prison, chains, deserts, hunger, nothing hurts, so that you reward me with your love. They shall not part us again; husbands and wives go into exile together in Siberia, do they not? There is a priest at Tobolsk; we stop there. Only say you love me!

ANNA.

You break my heart! Oh, I would love you, if I dared! God help me, I do love you, and have from the first day we met. Oh, Philip!

PHILIP.

Bless you, Anna. Sweetheart, you make this desert a garden, these fetters chains of flowers!
[*Staggers; she partly supports him.*]

ANNA.

Calm yourself, dear friend; you are overwrought with hunger and fatigue.

PHILIP.

[*Recovering himself.*] No, I am strong. Say you will be my wife, say they shall not part us again?

ANNA.

You show me a heaven I may not enter. If you only knew of all the time before we met, when I was a girl!

PHILIP.

I know it, all, everything. Petroski has told me; but I only know you as the beautiful vision of my dreams—the brave, good, loving woman, the self-sacrificing patriot, the friend of the poor, whose martyrdom as Anna Klosstock makes no barrier to a love like mine.

ANNA.

And you are content to take me as I am, an out-cast, a convict,—a criminal, perhaps?

PHILIP.

Anna, I love you!

ANNA.

Philip! [*Lays her head upon his shoulder.*]

[*Guards begin to circulate among the prisoners.
Preparations for moving on.*]

*Enter, from back of Pillar, CAPTAIN KARAZOFF,
attended by a GUARD.*

CAPTAIN.

[*To GUARD.*] Give the order to form ranks.

GUARD.

Prisoners ! Attention ! Form ranks.

[*Bustle of forming ranks.*]

PHILIP.

[*Staggers ; ANNA lays hand on his arm.*] I feel faint, Anna.

[*ANNA beckons BEPPO. BEPPO presses cup to FORSYTH'S lips. PHILIP drinks ; looks up, revived.*]

GUARD *thrusts ANNA and PHILIP back into ranks
with butt-end of rifle.*

GUARD.

Now then ; no tricks. Form ranks ! [*Passes on to
other groups.*]

ANNA.

[*To CAPTAIN KARAZOFF, who is lighting cigarette.*]
Mercy, Excellency ! He is faint and weary.

CAPTAIN.

Idleness, insubordination ! I know the symptoms.
[*Takes hold of PHILIP.*] Here, you ; wake up !
There's no carriage for such as you. Stand up !

ANNA.

[*CAPTAIN KARAZOFF looses his hold on PHILIP, who staggers and slips down by ANNA's side and sits, covers face with hands ; ANNA, rising to her full height, addresses KARAZOFF.*] I am a miserable woman ; but I would rather march to exile and to death, with such companions as these, than be forced to claim kinship with such as you ! No wonder the world curses the Great White Czar, when his word is the knout and his officers devils !

CAPTAIN.

Peace, woman ; or I'll have you flogged.

ANNA.

[*Shrinking with fear.*] Nay, forgive me. I know not what I say. Yet, surely, you have a mother or a sister ; a wife, perhaps. For their sakes, for the sake of the Christ you worship, have mercy !

Enter, hurriedly, DICK CHETWYND.

CHETWYND.

[*In loud voice.*] Is this Captain Karazoff's command?

[CAPTAIN KARAZOFF *turns towards* CHETWYND, *and examines him scornfully.* ANNA *starts at sight of* CHETWYND, *and stoops over* FORSYTH.

ANNA.

Courage, dear friend; relief is at hand; courage!

PHILIP.

[*Looking up.*] Heaven is going to be good to us?

ANNA.

Yes, yes!

CHETWYND.

[*In a loud voice.*] Captain Karazoff!

CAPTAIN.

[*Angrily.*] I am Captain Karazoff. Who are you?
And what is your business with me?

CHETWYND.

You have a prisoner, one Philip Forsyth, an Englishman.

CAPTAIN.

Well, sir, what of it?

[CHETWYND *sees* PHILIP, and ANNA *faces* group, which is on lines of picture in Act II.

CHETWYND.

My God! The picture he painted at Venice!

Enter FERARI, KLOSSTOCK, and OSSIP; while CHETWYND stands gazing at group. KLOSSTOCK stands where ANNA cannot see him.

It was an inspiration of Fate. Yes, it is Philip, by heavens! [*Rushes to him; sees* ANNA.] And the—
[ANNA stops him by a sign.]

ANNA.

I am Anna Klosstock.

CHETWYND.

[*To PHILIP.*] Philip, my dear boy! my dear Philip!

PHILIP.

Dick! [*They embrace.*]

[CAPTAIN KARAZOFF beckons GUARD, and in dumb show points to CHETWYND and gives an order. GUARD drags CHETWYND to CAPTAIN KARAZOFF'S feet.]

CAPTAIN.

Curse your audacity!

CHETWYND.

[*Struggling to his feet, and flinging GUARD aside.*] And curse yours, sir; and damn you, into the bargain! By God, sir, if you don't apologise, I'll have your epaulettes torn off.

FERARL.

[*Stepping between the CAPTAIN and CHETWYND.*] Gentlemen, gentlemen! Sir, [*to CAPTAIN KARAZOFF*] this gentleman is the bearer of a dispatch from the Minister of War at St. Petersburg.

CHETWYND.

And a cypher from his Imperial Majesty the Czar.

CAPTAIN.

[*Bowing subserviently.*] Pardon, sir.

CHETWYND.

Sorry it should require the authority of St. Petersburg to make a Russian officer observe the ordinary rules of humanity.

CAPTAIN.

I don't require a lesson in humanity from you, sir.

CHETWYND.

But, by Jupiter, I will give you one. Meanwhile, read that.

CAPTAIN.

[*Takes dispatch, and reads.*] "The unconditional release of Philip Forsyth." Very well, sir.

[*ANNA takes FORSYTH'S hand.*

CHETWYND.

Is that in order?

CAPTAIN.

Quite ; and I beg to offer you my humble apologies. I was irritated at the moment ; my command is a difficult one.

CHETWYND.

It would be easier, believe me, if you made it easier for the poor devils you hold in custody. But it is enough ; you insult me ; you apologise ; I accept your apology ; and now for the release of my prisoner.

[CAPTAIN KARAZOFF gives silent orders to GUARD ; a Smith comes forward, and they begin to hammer the shackles from FORSYTH'S legs.

FERARI.

And I have the honour to request your attention to this little document, M. le Capitaine.

CAPTAIN.

[*Taking document, and reading.*] The Czar is merciful.

CHETWYND.

It is the noblest privilege of power. [*To FORSYTH*] Philip, my dear lad, you are free !

FERARI.

Anna Klosstock, I bring your pardon also ; and with it a friend to share your joys of freedom. By Order of the Czar ! [*Brings forward KLOSSTOCK.*]

ANNA.

[*With great emotion and wonder.*] My father !
[*Sinks into his arms.*]

CURTAIN.

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